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C O N T E N T S

FOR THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF DIVINITY

The Experience of the Cross in the New Testament
and in the Life of To-Day
Penrose Wiley Hirst, A.B.

What is Religion? Chapters in a Guide for
College Discussion Groups
Fred Richard Morrow, A.B., A.M.

Rich and Poor in the Old Testament and in the
Synoptic Gospels
Galen Lee Rose, A.B., A.M.

Jesus Christ in the Mind of To-Day
Vincent Converse Widney, A.B.

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SACRED THEOLOGY

The Bible Self-Revising as Shown in the
Conception of God
Cliver Perry Avery, A.B., B.D.

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CROSS
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AND IN THE LIFE OF TO-DAY

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To Dr. John Wright Buckham,
friend and advisor, the writer
is deeply indebted. His patience,
friendly council, and scholarly
ideal have proven to be not only
a real source of inspiration but
also a goal.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1.
Chapter I - The Cross in the New Testament	6
New Testament Source Material	7
The Second Source	9
The Acts	11
The Synoptic Gospels	12
The Pauline Correspondence	16
The Johannine Writings	18
Interpretations of the Cross	23
Jesus and the Cross	23
The Earliest Idea of the Cross	43
Paul's Doctrine of the Cross	47
From Paul to John	51
The Cross in the Johannine Writings	58
Summary	64
Chapter II - A Modern Theory of the Atonement	67
(The Congregational Union Lectures for 1875 delivered by Dr. R. W. Dale)	
Introduction	68
Review of the History and Words of Jesus	71
The Testimony of the Apostles	76
The Verbal Basis of the Doctrine of the Atonement	79
Chapter III - The Cross in Present Day Experience	81
The Death of Jesus and the Modern World	87
Jesus and the Prophets	93
The Cross as a Revelation of God	97

INTRODUCTION

To reason about the cross at all is to discuss theology. Yet it is not the aim of the writer to present a theory of the Atonement. To do so in the least degree acceptably, calls for a knowledge and experience which the writer does not have. Nevertheless every Christian desires to bring his religious experience into effective relationship with his every-day life. Sooner or later, then, he will have to face the great fact of the Cross and interpret it in terms which he can understand. Such has been the task of nineteen centuries and each generation has been blessed in receiving from preceding generations their best thinking upon this vital subject. Yet the blessing is a mixed one. In bringing so vast a truth as this into the finite bounds of the human mind, however reverent the seer, something must of necessity be lost, which another generation will find vitally necessary; something added which a new day finds extraneous.

Science advances by the process of progressive increments. Each man adds to the known facts much or little, as he is able, proving or disproving as he goes, the work of his predecessors. There is something majestic in the instancy of man pushing ever into the new and untrod borderland of human knowledge. The language, too, of science is universal. Flash the facts of a scientific

experiment around the world and in a day it has been verified at the ends of the earth. Take the faded laboratory notes of any master of science long gone from his place among men and the results of his life-long study can be checked and found as vital and meaningful as the day he first recorded them.

But religious truth is different. It is not a matter of things and thinking about things. It is at the heart of life itself, centered in experience. What is known about it scientifically may be added to as other knowledge increases, but the vital thing itself is not passed down from generation to generation in the vessel hewn out by the hands of the past in which to carry the truth. Take any great expression of vital religious truth. For its author (and many others) it is light -- pure, God-given radiance. For his brother it may have no meaning whatever and some other view, absolutely meaningless to the first, will bring like light and comfort. Yet to both, the facts, insofar as they may be divorced from the personalities experiencing them, will be identical.

Commonly, within the same generation, such an explanation of experience gains acceptance according to the genius of its author in phrasing it so as to appeal to the hearts and minds of the greatest number. But the language of experience is not universal. Language is forever dropping out words as outworn or giving them new

meaning. It does not stand still unless the people who make it a living thing have themselves ceased to grow. The isolation of the "mountain whites" in the southern states is an example to the point. Caught in a back eddy of the life current, they dropped out of the strenuous world of development and their language crystalized. It is crude and uncouth in the ears of to-day, yet it is good English. As men grow, as they re-shape their thinking to more adequately meet their expanding experience, as they push out into new fields of science and philosophy, so will their language grow. To be intelligible, our expression of religious experience must be recast into the most vital words -- words not too fluid, not too fixed.

This, in a measure, represents the attitude of the present study. The doctrine of the Atonement puzzles, mystifies, or repels because it is garbed in the language of another day. It is not recognized as the living, re-vivifying experience which many Christians know in their own lives. It is not recognized by many other men as the expression of that great experience for which they seek.

The New Testament is the original source material for any study of the Atonement. It may be treated as the inspired and authoritative word of God to man, which it assuredly is. But there is another approach. Introductory to his book, "The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul",

Kirsopp Lake says:

"We need to take a lesson from our brothers the doctors. They are the students of the body as we are of the soul; they make the center of their work the study of the body as it is found here and now, and their use of the books of past generations is always subsidiary to that study. It is the fatal mistake of the theologian to think that he can do otherwise and understand the soul from the study of ancient books. Our great need at present is the study of the living soul."

In this spirit, the New Testament has been studied as the earliest record of the first flood-tide of a new experience of the love of God in the lives of men. No exhaustive analysis of the New Testament has been attempted. From its wealth of life has been drawn only the fact that because Jesus died on the Cross, he brought into the lives of two men of very different temperaments, the experience of a new birth.

No reference has been made to the theories which intervening generations have offered to explain the experience of the Atonement. If the attitude here set forth is valid, this omission is not amiss. The interpretation of that experience for to-day is relatively unaffected by their thoughts for it is as vital now, as when Paul saw the light before Damascus. Paul and John each gave to men an expression of that deep and abiding experience. They gave it, not to the men of to-day, but to those with whom they lived. That same process must be repeated so that the explanation is ever fresh.

Dr. Dale's book has been chosen as a representative and widely accepted modern view of the Atonement. It is a masterly and exhaustive work and, save for the closing chapters, follows the same lines in which this less pretentious study has been cast.

The writer is indebted to the labor of others for much of his material and full recognition has been aimed at. While not quoted, the work "Foundations - A statement of Christian Belief in Terms of Modern Thought: by Seven Oxford Men" has been especially helpful and suggestive.

CHAPTER I

THE CROSS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction

New Testament Source Material

- The Second Source

- The Acts

- The Synoptic Gospels

- The Pauline Correspondence

- The Johannine Writings

Interpretations of the Cross

- Jesus and the Cross

- The Earliest Idea of the Cross

- Paul's Doctrine of the Cross

- From Paul to John

- The Cross in the Johannine Writings

Summary

CHAPTER I

THE CROSS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

INTRODUCTION

In the hours of trial and crucifixion, Jesus stood alone. Those who had followed him through his ministry, those who had been life-long companions, fell from him -- fear-struck, panic-ridden fugitives. He who had come with such promise had died as might have died the most degraded criminal; he had hung in naked shame and agony on a felon's cross between two common thieves on the hill called Golgotha. Within a few days this group of Galilean peasants was re-assembled. Their leader was with them again. Then came to them that power of the "Holy Spirit", omen of the Messiah's reign, and they went forth to carry the good news to their fellow Jews. They were lashed by an urgency for haste. Long had the Messiah been promised but never before had the Spirit come thus upon men. He was, then, close at hand. This was the message of Pentecost, to convince the Jews that, as Peter said, "beyond peradventure of a doubt, God had made him both Lord and Christ (Messianic titles) -- this Jesus whom you crucified." (Acts 2:36)

They faced terrific odds. Most men in all the borders of that little country admitted willingly that this Jesus had been a man of God. Undoubtedly he had been a great teacher and prophet, but the Messiah -- that was different. The real problem then was to prove that Jesus really was the

Messiah and therefore coming soon in glory. The New Testament is evidence that, in the beginning, the followers of Jesus rested their proof in the resurrection. On the fateful day of trial and crucifixion scattered, fearful, confounded, within a week they were publishing abroad the fact that Jesus lived again. "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we are all witnesses." (Acts 2:32) This was the substance of the early Apostolic message. True, the cross was mentioned. It was thus that Jesus had been done to death, but the real message was the resurrection.

Paul first gives the cross its supreme place in Christianity. A stumbling block to the Jews, foolishness to the Greeks, to the earliest followers, a scandal and a paradox, it yet becomes for Paul and for countless millions since his time the very power of God unto salvation. Yet not from Paul alone is to be learned the full and vital story of the cross in the New Testament. The witness of others including the Master himself converge to prove its centrality. As the basis of modern faith, the fullest, most inclusive picture must be drawn from all these sources.

NEW TESTAMENT SOURCE MATERIAL

The various books of the New Testament furnish the material from which such a basis for faith is to be drawn. But no blanket statement will satisfy the modern mind. Of

primary importance then is a clear relationship as to time and thought appearing in the various writings. Admittedly much of this deliberation is in the realm of the problematical. No concise date can be attached to many, in fact most of the canonical books in this earliest Christian library. They can all, however, be set in some relative position within fairly well defined limits. Building frankly (and rather uncritically) upon the findings of modern scholarship this relationship may be stated somewhat as follows:

Roughly speaking, Paul's great epistles fall in the period between 50 and 60 A.D. -- this by fairly common consent -- and likewise, that they are the earliest extant Christian writings.¹ This removes by approximately twenty years, the earliest Christian writings from the events with which they were largely concerned. Are there no records or traces of sources running closer to the events which they detail? Assuredly, and a knowledge of them is not of small importance. Three sources which have generally authenticated themselves with modern scholars, are incorporated in the New Testament books and seem to antedate the earliest. The first

1. We shall not here question the authenticity of the sources. Whether we accept more or less of the Pauline correspondence as Paul's or attribute other writings to the men whose names they bear, the general conclusions will be but little affected. As Saintsbury says, "It has been the mission of the nineteenth century to prove that everybody's work was written by somebody else, and it will not be the most useless task of the twentieth century to betake itself to more profitable inquiries." History of Criticism, p. 152, Saintsbury.

of these is the so-called "Second Source" of the Synoptic theorists; the others are the two sources of the present book of Acts. Following these writings come the present Canonical Books: Paul's early letters to Thessalonika, Galatia, Corinth, and Rome; then probably Mark, followed by Luke and Matthew; Paul's prison epistles (no question being made of authorship in doubtful cases); the Acts; the Apocalypse; Hebrews; the Fourth Gospel and First Johannine Epistle. This list neither presupposes a definite chronological order nor a definite progression. It simply indicates in a general way a development of thought which the books themselves seem to indicate. It is not herein discussed nor defended save in so far as it appears relevant to the subject in hand.¹

The Second Source

The Apostles after the Resurrection appear only as preachers. The earliest chapters of Acts give this unmistakable picture of them. It could hardly be otherwise. The society in which they moved was non-literary. Likewise in that small country no one was liable to forget the young "Prophet" who had so roused the people. Nor would they forget the fact that he had been crucified by the Roman procurator Pilate and had afterwards been "raised from the

1. The general idea in mind is similar to that expressed by A.E.J.Rawlinson and R.G.Parsons in "Foundations" under the title, "The Interpretation of the Christ in the New Testament."

dead." Upwards of five hundred people had seen him alive (Cor. 15:6) and their story would be well known. Truly indeed "this thing was not done in a corner." These common and unforgettable facts were at the heart of the Apostolic message (Acts 2:22f; 3:12f). Likewise the impending end of world when Jesus should come as Messiah spurred them to convert as many men as possible ere the long heralded event should transpire and their fellow countrymen who had previously rejected Jesus be shut out from the glory of the new day, to share which was their rightful portion. As generally reconstructed, the second source¹ fits this situation admirably. No painfully decipherable volume could make this tale so vivid as the human voice.² Only that was written down which one would be likely to forget, and that which would be useful for the better instructed leaders to refer to occasionally as an authority on points of detail. This first document (perhaps the "Logia" of the Papias Tradition) is quite intelligently understood as a supplement to the living tradition of a generation which had known Jesus.

"Within a dozen years after the event (i.e. death and resurrection of Jesus) something of the kind would be needed. It is not intelligible as a document thirty or forty years later when the events which it presupposes as matters of common knowledge were a generation old."

1. There seems to be a reasonable degree of agreement among scholars as to the general content of this source. Hamack, "Sayings of Jesus", Streeter and Hawkins, "Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem."

2. The argument here follows closely that of B.H. Streeter, "Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem", p. 215 f.

One last word might be added in view of the fact that this reconstruction of the Second Source leaves it silent as to the crucifixion. The argument just closed accounts for this omission. It is generally recognized that this was the message of the Apostles and Paul. Before all else, it is the one thing the author of the Second Source would feel no need of recording.

The Acts

The book of Acts, a sequel to the Gospel of Luke, is apparently composed of two well differentiated sources, one an Aramaic course ill defined in our present book, the other a Greek diary of one of Paul's traveling companions,¹ probably Luke.² The accuracy of these sources as historical data of the Apostolic age is a matter of debate. Bacon maintains that the Aramaic source in its basic elements at least "must in some form antedate even the earliest of the extant Epistles of Paul."³ Ropes credits the book with considerable historic accuracy. The Aramaic source⁴ is in no case so well preserved as to be even in part isolated, after the fashion of the reconstruction of the Synoptists' Second Source. All that may be said is that the events

1. The so-called "We-document" which Torrey terms Second Acts, covering as it does, the second half of the present book (15:36 - 28:31) Bacon, The Gospel of Mark, p. 6.

2. "The strong case for identifying the diarist with the historian simplifies the authorship considerably." Moffatt, Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p. 297.

3. The Gospel of Mark, p. 6.

4. Probably oral. The Apostolic Age, p. 24.

recorded in the early chapters of the book

"do not come to us directly from a member of the primitive Jewish community. The result of criticism is to give a fair degree of confidence in the picture of the general development of events, while the detail seems in many cases to be merely a part of the telling of the story. The speeches of Peter which constitute a large part of these chapters would be a great aid in our task if we could be sure that they are more than the free composition of the writer of the book. Unfortunately it is probable that the writer is here only following the custom of ancient historians and giving us as a literary decoration of his narrative what Peter might have said. They cannot be used with any confidence as presenting distinctive ideas of Peter. And yet the author has shown great skill and dramatic sympathy in their composition, and in view of what we otherwise know, we may believe that these speeches give us in the main, a not unfair notion of what Jewish Christians thought and preached. For the view that the speech of Stephen is based upon actual recollection communicated to an author, more can be said. But it shows throughout our author's literary style and its present form is his."¹

In contrast, the probability that Luke is the author of the "We-document", is well borne out by the same author.

The Synoptic Gospels

It is a striking fact that, without the four canonical Gospels, practically nothing would be known of the historic Jesus. References in the Pauline epistles and other writings are extremely few and incidental -- simply explanations of

1. The Apostolic Age, p. 75 f.

practical matters such as the proper procedure for the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:23 f) or the admonition given the elders of Ephesus to remember the words of the Lord Jesus (Acts 20:35). No adequate understanding of the place of the cross in the New Testament is to be had which overlooks these books as revealing, so far as possible, the mind of Jesus as he moved through his ministry toward Calvary.

The Fourth Gospel falls at once outside this category. A mere cursory reading reveals a predetermining doctrinal factor which removes the book from the realm of simple biography.

"In it Jesus acts and speaks as a Being who is not of this world but who has come to this world from elsewhere to redeem it and is soon to return to that higher region. But with the earlier evangelical tradition it is otherwise. In the narrative here it is difficult to see any attempt to express any particular doctrine, further than that common to all Christians alike, that Jesus is the Messiah. As the detail of the life of Jesus is absent from the (Pauline) epistles, so with some exceptions, the doctrine of the epistles is absent from the Gospels. There is no attempt in the epistles to make use of the evangelical narrative; and there is no attempt in the evangelical narratives to show agreement with the doctrinal system. The two sets of writings belong as it were to different atmospheres of thought, and it is evident to the unprejudiced eye that the two are independent of each other."¹

With this statement Moffatt agrees.² Bacon, however, attempts to show considerable direct and indirect Pauline influence in the Gospel of Mark. His conclusion is that "Mark shows a direct but not literary dependence on the preaching of the great Apostle to the Gentiles."³

1. Menzies, the Earliest Gospel, p. 11.

2. Moffatt discusses the matter in relation to each of the three synoptics in his Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament.

3. The Gospel of Mark, p. 271.

The material of primary interest in the synoptic Gospels is found in the Passion narrative and those few scattered sayings relation to the cross. In view of Bacon's charge of Pauline influence, it will be well to examine this section of the Gospels more carefully. Here as elsewhere, Matthew follows Mark with his usual regularity but Luke exercises a freedom in the use of his foundational sources entirely foreign and in absolute contrast to his procedure throughout the rest of his Gospel. This change is noted first in his record of the institution of the Lord's Supper and continues through the visit of the women to the tomb (22:14- 24:10). Sir John C. Hawkins has made a careful analysis of Luke's variations¹ and finds that he breaks absolutely with the Markan order of events, ceases to follow the words of Mark, and introduces in a very short section far more independent material than in any other portion of his narrative. The examination points to another source and Dr. Hawkins suggests that these facts are of such a nature as to indicate "a long and gradual conflation of the mind rather than a simple conflation of the pen." In other words, an oral source has so commended itself to Luke that it completely dominates the source which throughout his Gospel has been fundamental and dominant. In Philemon, Luke is mentioned as a "fellow-worker" with Paul (v. 24; also a similar suggestion in Col. 4:14). So close a relationship as this implies would make Luke a preacher of the Pauline

1. Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem, p. 76 f.

message, dominated by the same general type of ideas. From the Pauline writings and from "Second Acts" the same evidence comes: Paul centered his preaching in the cross. Luke's freedom then in breaking with Mark might truly be due to an immediate and vivid knowledge of the cross and the events centering there. Dr. Hawkins' suggestion commends itself as sound reasoning. The other evangelists show no such influence in this part of their record and may be considered as free as Menzies concludes. This must, however, be recognized: the writers of three Gospels were living in the general Christian environment from which came the Pauline letters. As an unavoidable reflection of that common background, it would be natural that they all should show some general similarity. The exact extent of this factor will be considered later in an examination of the Markan Passion narrative and allied material.

As the earliest extant Gospel, Mark's relationship to the Second Sources is of interest and importance. He wrote at a time and place unfamiliar with the living tradition which the Second Source had supplemented, though the sayings of Jesus in some form were probably fairly well known there. His Gospel, as Streeter holds, may have been a supplement to these latter. Its contents bear out such a supposition, someone having characterized it as "a history of the Passion expanded backward. Many scholars hold it specifically so related to the Second Source.¹

1. Moffatt, Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p. 204. The reverse relationship is also held by some. Harnach, the Sayings of Jesus, p. 248, note 2.

The Pauline Correspondence

Certain facts concerning Paul have already been suggested; his greatness in the Apostolic Church; the central place given in his Epistles to the Christ crucified; his influence upon other Christian writings. Before a survey of his writings is made to discover his conception of the cross, it is expedient that the true nature of these writings be determined. The similarity of parts of them in literary style to the already familiar and popularized 'diatribe' is generally recognized. Though few of his letters are addressed to individuals, they are truly personal letters to churches with whom Paul felt a close bond of Christian fellowship and the deep interest of a father. Under the glowing fervor of his teaching these people to whom he wrote had committed themselves to Christ. The whole of his correspondence was filled with the anxiety of love that they walk worthy of that commitment. Being, then, continuations of previously established contacts, writings from friend to friends, and of a very intimate and informal nature, not too much regularity of purpose or content is found. In no sense of the word are they carefully thought out treatises in which cool, calculated argument predominates. In them Paul bares his heart to show the agony of fear or doubt or anger under which he labors because of the mistakes or disobedience of those to whom he writes. He argues, coaxes, or threatens. But he can and does in the next sentence hold out

the joy and peace which comes to one who stands fast and by the glow of his own passion, sets them on fire. They are surcharged with his purpose, brimming with his love and with the very life of the man himself. "They are vascular: cut them anywhere and they will bleed." To draw out of such a stream of life a cold, systematic theology, is to miss the genius of the man. They are anything but logic; insight, inference, experience -- these rather are the basis.

When Paul sought to express this living message, he used the thought category of his time and background. As he was trained, so he remained, a Hebrew son of Hebrew parents. As Ropes says,

"into a previously existing warp he wove a Christian woof. He was in no sense the medium of revelation of a completely new system of doctrine. There was indeed something new but it found in the old its chief means of expression; and throughout the whole, the old constantly reappears, and forms a permanent background without which the Christianity of Paul as we know it could not have come into existence. . . . We shall find ourselves wholly at a loss to understand what he means unless we recognize that in the substratum of his ideas he merely repeats what was familiar to all who knew the Old Testament and the Jewish thought of his time."¹

To this may be added the language of the Greek and particularly the Oriental mysteries. On these, Paul draws in a limited way. Being so far removed from familiar language of Paul, it is imperative that its nature be kept in mind.

The Pauline letters are not considered separately in this paper. From occasional writings, it is a chance outcropping here and there which furnishes a clue to the

1. The Apostolic Age, p. 135-6.

vein of thought. From the position and nature of these scattered indications in the various epistles, we must judge the nature and trend of the unseen whole. A general chronological order for Paul's letters has already been suggested. More explicitly, the correspondence with Thessalonika is earliest and, while but little removed from the rest of his writings, seems to show but the beginnings of his characteristic theology. Roughly speaking, the rest of his letters are grouped for discussion though the later letters (Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and Ephesians) supposedly written from prison either in Caesarea or Rome, have much in common which indicates later development. Pauline authorship for Ephesians is denied by many scholars. Moffatt has entirely given up the idea that it is more than "a catholicised version of Colossians written in Paul's name to Gentile Christendom."¹ It is at least blood kin to the other undoubted Pauline letters and will be included in this group.

The Johannine Writings

Under this title are grouped the writings which, traditionally, are ascribed to John, the beloved disciple. Only two of the canonical books, the Gospel of John and the First Johannine Epistle come under consideration here. By many, they are not considered the work of the same author. Moffatt says, "The characteristic traits of the Fourth

1. Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p. 393.

Gospel and the First Epistle betray a difference beneath their unity which is best accounted for by the supposition that, while the writer of the Epistle lived and moved within the circle in which the Fourth Gospel originated, he had an individuality and purpose of his own."¹ Schmiedel so emphasizes the similarity of the two that he is led to say, "After all that has been said so far, the Gospel and the first Epistle may very well seem to have been the work of the same person; . . . It is indeed permissible to think that one and the same person might have expressed himself differently in two different works. But the facts of the case are certainly more easily understood if we suppose that we have to do with different authors."² Such is the critical evidence for their intimacy of thought. It will be necessary to make some general reference to the date of these works. A bitter controversy has been waged about this subject into which it is neither necessary nor desirable to enter. It is enough to say that it was written within at least a few years after the close of the first century.³

As Paul dealt with specific problems of his time, so this author. The form and style of his writing is not analogous to the Pauline epistles but like them have their being in specific problems facing the young church. They are directed primarily against the Gnosticism which, in the second Christian century, caused such a struggle. How far this

1. Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p. 593.

2. The Johannine Writings, p. 208 f.

3. The opinions of the various scholars as Moffatt lists them are widely scattered with a leaning toward the above-mentioned terminus ad quem. Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p. 580.

'heresy' had developed at the time of these writings is not an issue here.

As Paul used the terminology of Judaism, so in these writings a distinct and different terminology predominates. As has been suggested, the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel is not the simple historic figure of the synoptists. This change comes through the expression of this historic Christology which the author knew in the terms of the Alexandrian school of philosophy, the outstanding innovation, of course, being the identification of Jesus with the Logos, the self-revealing principle of the divine nature. Other influences are present but not to the same outstanding degree. These underlying philosophical concepts are, on the whole, as far from the modern mind as the Hebraic substructure of Pauline thought but they are vitally a part of both the Gospel and the Epistle.. The universe is considered as dualistic, God being opposed by the prince of this world, the devil. It is not an absolute dualism for the devil is defeated from the beginning; he has no power over the Logos (John 14:31). Another factor of importance is the transcendent nature of God. This is no new or unique idea but in the Alexandrian school it was so emphasized that God could not come in direct contact with His creation. Between Him and the world were interposed a host of semi-divine, spiritual beings. It is not evident that in this system the Logos had become the creator. At least he was only one of a number of beings and in the Gnostic system had had no incarnation. On these concepts, a great variety of doctrine had

grown up in the Christian church to which the Johannine writings gave answer in the doctrine of the Logos, as at once creator, revealer, savior. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:9.)

However, it is imperative to note that the Fourth Gospel is no philosophical treatise. The Logos doctrine (though not mentioned outside the prologue) affects profoundly the whole book but it does not dominate it. The purpose of the book is clearly stated in the closing sentence (20:31, preceding the 'appendix'). It is twofold: to bring men to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and as a correlary, that 'they may have life in his name' (through their belief). It is

"a study or interpretation of his (Jesus') life in order to bring out his permanent significance as the Logos-Christ for faith. The author does not find Jesus in the Logos, he finds the Logos in the Jesus of the church and the starting point of his work is a deep religious experience of Jesus as the revelation of the Father. At the same time he is to be judged by the fact that his account of Jesus is introduced by a sketch of what he understood to be an adequate philosophy of the Christian religion."¹

He frankly says that he has chosen only relevant facts from the generally known history of Jesus (20:30). Obviously, then, he differs in purpose from the synoptists who aimed to be more historical.

1. Moffatt, Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, p. 525.

"His interest on the one hand is in the historic person of Jesus, in whom he recognizes the Son of God revealed in the flesh. But he desires at the same time to emphasize the abiding purpose and value of the historic life. Jesus Christ was more than a wonderful figure in the past. His appearance on earth had been only the beginning of a larger, enduring life and it was still possible for His people to maintain fellowship with Him and receive his quickening. . . . In the Jesus who passes before us as a Person in history, we are meant also to recognize the eternal Christ, who is still revealed, as an inward, life-giving presence, to those that believe in Him."¹

Ropes sums up the Gospel as

"a work of theological reflection, which presupposes an adequate knowledge of the main facts of Jesus' life, and presents, attached to scant framework of the course of his life an interpretation of what he was and what he said. . . . It is Jesus' thought universalized and applied, its abstract truths brought to the fore; we move in a world above space and time of which the Synoptic Gospels are so full. As a great scholar has said, it is the sayings of Jesus transfused into infinite renderings."²

So strong an impression of real appreciation for Jesus is left by a study of the Johannine writings that it is difficult to conceive it as coming from the pen of another than John, the beloved disciple. Facts uncovered by textual criticism may not prove that this is true but they certainly do not disprove it conclusively.

1. E. F. Scott, The Fourth Gospel, p. 3-4.
2. The Apostolic Age, p. 244 f.

Jesus and the Cross

If Jesus had explained to his disciples that he must die, why was the cross such a shock and a scandal? Others might naturally have been offended; they at least should have remained unshaken. If they had this information preceding the event, why was it never used in arguing the case before the Jews? Nothing is recorded in Acts but proof texts from the Old Testament.

The direct references we find in the Markan narrative to the overshadowing cross wherein Jesus suggests or explains his death, are these:

Mk. 8:31 - 9:1	Jesus' prediction of his
Mt. 16:21 - 28	death following Peter's
Lk. 9:22 - 27	confession
Mk. 9:30 - 32	An independent prediction
Mt. 17:22 - 23	very like the preceding
Lk. 9:43b-45	
Mk. 10:32 - 34	An apparently independent
Mt. 20:17 - 19	prediction given on the
Lk. 18:31 - 34	way to Jerusalem
Mk. 10: 45	Jesus suggests his death
Mt. 20: 28	and explains it as a ransom
Mk. 12:1 - 12	The parable of the vineyard
Mt. 21: 33-46	
Lk. 20: 9-16	
Mk. 14: 8	The anointing of Jesus by
Mt. 26: 12	the woman
Mk. 14: 22-25	The institution of the
Mk. 26: 26-29	Lord's Supper
Lk. 22: 15-20	

Two other references may aid to a discovery of Jesus' thoughts about his own death which is the purpose of this section. They

are:

Mk. 14: 33-36
Mt. 26: 38-39
Lk. 22: 42-43

Jesus' prayer in
Gethsemane

Mk. 15: 34
Mt. 27: 46

Jesus' words from
the Cross

Each one of these nine references will be examined separately, the purpose being to see behind the mind of the evangelist to the mind of Jesus and the interpretation to be placed on his own death.

Mk. 8:31 - 9:1, paralleled in Mt. 16: 21-28 and Lk. 9: 22-27 records the earliest prediction by Jesus of his death. Quoting Mk.:

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, and the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

This teaching seems to have been called out by Peter's confession that Jesus is the Messiah. It precedes the Master's words upon taking up the cross and following him and the paradox of losing and finding life.

Mt. anticipates by including in the statement that he must go up to Jerusalem. Menzies recognizes here the beginnings of the "tragic contrast between the view Jesus takes and that taken by his disciples, of his journey to Jerusalem and of his Messiahship." He makes this general criticism which is pertinent:

"To judge from the book of Acts we should believe that the arguments by which the Apostles explained the strange facts of the suffering and death of the Messiah were arrived at by themselves through their own efforts of thought and study of Scriptures. If therefore Jesus taught his disciples as he is here said to have done, during his own lifetime, they must have forgotten what he told them, so that they had to learn it all over again. The only other alternative is to suppose that Jesus' intimations to his disciples on these subjects were not so clear and precise as they are made to appear in this and in later passages. While he could not fail to see that danger and death lay in his path his predictions on these subjects cannot have been so detailed as the Gospels give them, but must have been filled up from the interpretations the early church learned to place on the Master's suffering and death. Had he used all the words placed in his mouth, his followers could not have forgotten them, nor have failed, as Acts shows they did, to appeal to them. We have to recognize the fact that the tradition as to the suffering and death changed more than that of works of power and the sayings, because it entered, as these did not, into church doctrine."

Loisy and Schmiedel¹ do not consider this passage historic because of its contrast to the real Messianic expectation. Montefiore sums up their position thus:

"He had a short preliminary task to fulfill before the Messiahship could be announced or openly conferred by God.

(Hence his order to the disciples to be silent as to his Messiahship) Soon, however, he would show himself as Messiah in Jerusalem. At this period he did not predict or even foresee his own death. The precise predictions are due to redaction and not to history."

'Must' in v. 31 Menzies interprets as more or less identifying Jesus with Isaiah's "suffering servant" (he does not say so explicitly). "This is the divine plan for him; such is the

1. These scholars, together with Welhausen and J. Weiss, are quoted indirectly through the splendid commentary of C. G. Montefiore, "The Synoptic Gospels."

divine necessity (must) his career must follow." Montefiore dismisses it briefly thus: "What was the 'must'? In the eyes of the writer doubtless because the divine purpose in sending Jesus to earth could only be fulfilled by his death."

The second passage wherein Jesus predicts his death is Mk. 9:30-32, paralleled in Mt. 17:22-23 and Lk. 9:43b-45.

The subject is introduced as though quite a new idea. Mark says,

He taught his disciples, and said unto them, the Son of Man is delivered up into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and when he is killed, after three days, he shall rise again. But they understood not the saying, and were afraid to ask him.

Luke simply says,

For the Son of Man shall be delivered up into the hands of men.

He adds:

But they understood not the saying, and it was concealed from them, that they should not perceive it.

He includes Mark's closing phrase.

Matthew follows Mark save for the last sentence. He writes in its place, 'And they were exceedingly sorry.'

This statement is almost identical with the first.

Menzies thinks it is historical like the first. He explains the attitude of the disciples by saying

"They were Jews and took in but slowly the doctrine of a crucified Messiah. What is taught by Jesus is not yet the Pauline doctrine which sees in the Messiah's death such rich and infinite purpose but only the doctrine of Acts (2:23,24, etc.) that the death was part of the divine ordinance for the Messiah and would be made good by the Resurrection. . . . The difficulty remains, that if Jesus spent so much labor in seeking to teach the disciples these thoughts, they ought not to have been so unprepared as his death found them."

Montefiore says:

"The predictions of his death are reported several times. They are inserted without any close connection with their context nor do they refer to each other. The predictions can only in the most limited sense be historical. Pfeiderer thinks that Jesus' entry and action in Jerusalem, as well as his last words upon the cross, give the undoubted impression that he went to Jerusalem not to die, but to fight and conquer. Defeat and death may have crossed his mind as a possibility but not more than this, just as they cross the mind of a general upon the eve of battle."

Menzies says he expected "to rise again, not at the general resurrection (12:26) but at once, after the very briefest interval." However, as Montefiore points out,

"if Jesus foretold his own resurrection, it is odd that the disciples should have been so surprised when it took place, or when they thought it took place. (He makes no admissions. His is strictly the Jewish attitude). J. Weiss supposes that Jesus did anticipate and predict his sufferings and death. Why should he not have foreseen that the bitter opposition of the scribes, the fickleness of the people, the fear of the authorities, would make this end inevitable? Sometimes he may have hoped that he would succeed without martyrdom; even at Gethsemane he prayed that this might be possible; but usually his mood and conviction are different. The details of his Passion -- these have been filled in after the event -- he did not foresee, but only the hard necessity of ultimate triumph being prepared and made way for by suffering, conflict, and death."

In Lk. 17:25 stands the same prediction as above unparalleled by either Matthew or Mark. It occurs in Luke's prediction as to the time and place of the Parousia. It seems to be interpolated as it does not appear when its context is used by Matthew and Mark.

The third reference to the death of Jesus occurs in Mk. 10:32-34 paralleled by Mt. 20:17-19 and Lk. 18:31-34. Mark records the 'amazement' and 'fear' of the disciples as they followed Jesus toward Jerusalem. Jesus teaches the disciples

repeating practically the same words as before recorded. Luke adds, 'And all the things that are written through the prophets shall be accomplished.' New material added by all three synoptists is: 'the Jews shall deliver him up unto the Gentiles, and they shall mock him, and shall spit upon him, and shall scourge him.'

Matthew specifies the mode of death -- crucifixion, and Luke again says that the disciples 'understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, and they perceived not the things that were said.' Menzies says,

"As before we judge that the evangelical tradition made these predictions more detailed and precise than they can have been when Jesus uttered them. He no doubt saw generally what fate awaited him in Jerusalem; the expectation breathes in all his language at this time, but the disciples were not prepared for his death, as they must have been if this instruction was historical, nor for his resurrection."

Montefiore again insists that

"it is strange that each prediction is, as it were, independent of the others. Jesus here tells what is going to happen to him as if he had never mentioned the subject before."

He adds, however,

"yet Jesus may have had some dark ominous feeling that he was destined to suffer and die in Jerusalem. That he had more, is not very probable it is rather more likely that the great 'denouncement' which in the Gospel story Jesus is represented as expecting to happen soon after his death, at his Parousia, he really expected to happen after his arrival at Jerusalem, and without the necessity of his death. The conception of his death as a ransom was not his own. In his mind it was surely through his life and his teachings that he hoped to benefit his people, not through his death."

In Mk. 10:45 and Mt. 20:28 a phrase suggestive of his death follows Jesus' words to his disciples after James and John make request for special honors in the Messianic Kingdom. He suggests his suffering as his 'cup' and 'baptism' and, telling the disciples that priority in the Kingdom depends upon being a servant to all, adds: 'For the Son of Man also came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many.'

Matthew does not change the wording. Luke has no such parallel but elsewhere (22:27) records that Jesus said only, 'I am in the midst of you as he that serveth.'

Menzies accepts this statement as proving that Jesus had begun to see that his death might be of real value. Just what Jesus conceived this ransom to be, he is not sure. As to the "purchase-money given to obtain the freedom of a slave," it is vague and meaningless. As a transfer of merit from one person to another, it is not foreign to Jewish thought. The idea is perhaps "too developed to ascribe to Jesus himself, though it probably enters Pauline doctrine." In the sense of an atoning sacrifice such as appears in the Pauline epistles, it would

"furnish a strong indication of Pauline influence on this Gospel The words of our passage here are vague and we ought not to force from them a more precise meaning than they naturally yield. They certainly convey the assurance that Jesus became reconciled to the prospects of death when he saw he was to die for the benefit of others."

Montefiore claims that

"authentic words of Jesus seem expanded (in 41-45) and put by the evangelist into an artificial connection with the preceding story The question (to which this purports to be an answer) of what is to happen after death or at the Parousia is neglected."

In the idea of a ransom Montefiore finds

"the influence of Pauline ideas and terminology. So Loisy most strongly: 'The idea of the life given as a ransom belongs to another current of thought than the idea of service'. . . . The passage in any sense seems to show the influence of Isaiah 53. J. Weiss says: 'It is indeed far from inconceivable that Jesus had included the idea of his approaching death in his work of service and love. Nay it is even probable that he was convinced that his death would in some way be beneficial to the men whom he had striven to win by deed and word. But whether he thought exactly of a sacrificial death or of vicarious penal suffering, such as -- according to later interpretation -- the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is supposed to have described, must remain doubtful. For us today, to whom the notion of an offering for sin offers many difficulties, it is pleasant that we may be satisfied with the thought that his death was just the same as his whole life: a faithful service to the brethren.'"

Montefiore adds:

"Jesus may just conceivably have realized that his death would be to the advantage of many; that many would enter the Kingdom as an effect of his death."

The four statements which have been examined seem to stand together. From them and the general gamut of opinion gathering round them, much valuable information is to be gained. In the first place, Menzies makes a strong point in citing the ignorance of the disciples as to the death and resurrection of Jesus. In this Montefiore agrees. Surely

Jesus must not have given such specific teaching as to his death or his followers had been better prepared to meet it. The independent manner in which the separate predictions of death are introduced is awkward and unreasonable. There is not enough progression in thought, aside from the awkwardness, to admit of successive teachings. Altogether, the accounts seem forced and out of place. The accuracy of detail reflects history -- a filling in of some authentic background after the events had occurred. Actual fact seems to have been colored. That authentic background was probably that Jesus knew, and in some way made known the fact, that he might expect death in going up to Jerusalem. In the last incident, Menzies seemingly has a struggle not to admit the idea of ransom as Pauline in character. Of course its acceptance hinges upon what meaning the word is made to carry. It is common in both Christian and Jewish theology and in both places its most natural and common connotation is sacrificial, however broadly it may be interpreted. It does not fit easily with the language of service which here, plainly, is its context. It can hardly imply more than the idea that Jesus did think he might finally, in the not distant future, serve in this way.

In the Parable of the Vineyard, Mk. 12:1-12, paralleled in Mt. 21:33-46 and Lk. 20:9-16, Jesus makes another reference, veiled though it is, to his death. Menzies sees in this parable that "what Jesus does not wish to say directly can yet be indicated in a parable He has not yet declared

himself, but is waiting for the future. Yet he also is there; the discerning already recognize him; and a parable may lead many to think the matter over and see what is before their eyes."

The parable is obviously from Isaiah 5 and Jesus' purpose is the same as was Isaiah's originally. He is showing God's dealings with Israel brought 'up to date' so to speak. The intent is clearly to identify himself with the 'beloved Son.' The parable then "conveys Jesus' expectation that his claim would be repudiated and that he would not fare otherwise at the hands of his people than God's earlier messengers had done."

The close of the parable throws some doubt upon it for Menzies as well as for Montefiore who says, "It would seem very doubtful whether this parable can be ascribed to Jesus himself. In its present form, at any rate, it reflects a later situation and reflects his death." He cites Loisy as holding that

"perhaps it belongs to the same stratum in the redaction of the whole Gospel as the passages in which Jesus describes the details of his death and resurrection. . . . The whole has rather the air of an argument of the first Christians against the Jews than a speech of Jesus to the people or notables of Jerusalem."

Though in its present detail it is hardly possible not to see some ideas later than Jesus' time, this parable must certainly come, in some form, within the range of Jesus' thought as an expression of his idea as to the future. If the fate of the 'beloved Son' were left as a question, it would more nearly reflect what Jesus' state of mind is here conceived to be.

When the woman anointed Jesus with the nard, he drops a hint (Mk. 14:8; Mt. 26:12) that would indicate a recognition on his part that the act had significance beyond that originally intended. Menzies accepts this view. Jesus sees it as "the beginnings of the burial rites." He adds that "in the case of crucifixion, there were no such rites; from this and other indications, it seems clear that Jesus, while foreseeing his death, did not foresee the manner of it." Montefiore questions the words. If they are authentic, it must be assumed "that Jesus thought that his death might possibly be nigh. By this time, even though he went to Jerusalem to triumph and not to die, he may have come to realize that death would be the more probable issue of his venture." This is not possible. The direct reference to his death is "inconceivable in Jesus' mouth. He not only assumes his death, but also his burial and nobody is astonished."

The two main lines of criticism quoted throughout this analysis are based upon conflicting assumptions. Menzies likes to see in Jesus a full knowledge of the certainty of his death as the only means of fulfilling his mission. Montefiore, on the other hand, pictures Jesus as conscious only of fulfilling the accepted concept of Messiah. Death is not more than the remotest possibility -- almost, if not wholly, inconceivable by him. Did Jesus really see a hidden meaning in this simple act of devotion? Probably not. Here again we may see a later strain of thought identifying with a beautiful fact its later interpretation.

There are so many questions to face in dealing with the last supper that it is difficult not to cloud the immediate issue: what view of his death lay behind the action and words of Jesus at this time? The records in Mk. 14:22-25, paralleled in Mt. 26: 26-29 and Lk. 22:15-20, are agreed neither in detail nor general movement. The relevant material cited from Mark is as follows:

As they were eating, he took bread and when he had blessed, he brake it, and gave to them and said, Take ye; this is my body. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave to them; and they all drank of it. And he said to them, this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.

Matthew makes some changes. He says:

Jesus gave the cup saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the remission of sins.

Luke records him as saying of the bread,

'This is my body, which is given for you'
and of the cup,

'the new covenant in my blood even
that which is poured out for you.'

Menzies says in regard to the comparison of the bread to his body:

"The point lies not in the breaking but in the giving. He had quite made up his mind to die. . . . Here he expresses the view he has learned to take of his death, now so certainly impending. He undertakes it willingly; called to give up his life, he willingly devotes it to the service of those who may be benefited by it. In saying to his disciples, 'Take, this is my body,' he means that they are to regard his death as a gift, the last of all his gifts, which he makes to them deliberately. His life is not taken from him against his will, but freely given. Even in his death he is to be thought of, not as one who is overwhelmed and hurled by the might of circumstances into a dark fate, but as one who goes cheerfully,

with love in his heart, to make the last great scarifice, and feels as he does so that he is allowed to serve his brethren in his death as he had served them in his life."

Of the cup, Menzies says:

'We must ask what the disciples could find in the words before they knew of the death on the cross. They knew that their Master considered himself to be on the point of being arrested and put to death. And they knew from the symbol of the bread he had given them that he was prepared to die, and was in his own eyes, voluntarily giving up his life for their benefit. What is added to these thoughts by the words 'This is my covenant-blood which is shed for many'? They introduce a view as to the purpose of Christ's death. He recognizes his death as God's will, and voluntarily undertakes it for the sake of others, but in what way is it to benefit them? It is his view on this point that we now learn. Covenant blood is the blood of a victim offered to celebrate and ratify the inauguration of a new relation or new terms of agreement." (Ex. 24:8; Is. 50:5.)

Menzies will not push the analogy; he simply applies it in its broadest sense. He does believe that Jesus accepted Old Testament prophecy (v. 21) as indicative of his course of action.

"He has considered the matter and consented to play the part, so different from that which might have been anticipated, which now opens before him. In this case also, the point of the parable lies in the giving, not the shedding. . . . gladly and willingly, he gives up his life to be the sacrifice at the beginning of the Kingdom. For him the death; for many, for far more than the disciples, for men who do not yet believe but who will now do so, the Kingdom and its joys."

In the parallel passages, Menzies sees in the words, other than the simplest statement of Mark, additions "from later ritual and thought."

Montefiore says of the words 'this is my body',

"in their brief and mysterious character we may see reason to believe that they are authentic. What did they mean to Jesus? At the most, we may assume the idea of a communion through the common partaking of the same food. Jesus may be supposed to say, 'regard this bread as my body and, by eating it let us form one society, let us be united to each other; be you united to me.' If Jesus alludes to his death as a sacrifice or gift rendered for the sake of others, we can best interpret 'this is my body' as Menzies interprets it (he thinks Jesus did not eat). 'Even as I give you this bread, so I shall give up my body.' But this does not seem a very obvious idea or obvious parallelism."

Montefiore sees many difficulties in the second part of the rite. He quotes Welhausen as holding the words 'which is shed for many,' "an addition to the more original remainder. The idea of communion is crossed by them with the idea of a symbolizing of the sacrificial death." J. Weiss thinks

"the words 'of the covenant' join awkwardly on to the words 'my blood'. Hence the suspicion is aroused that here too we have an addition assimilating Mark to Paul, and the oldest form is 'this is my blood' in close parallelism to 'this is my body'. If so, then to Mark the meaning of the whole would be: 'as the wine is poured forth from the chalice, so was the blood (or life) of Jesus spilt as a sacrifice. The wine symbolizes the death of Jesus just as the bread does."

Welhausen would keep 'of the covenant'. He makes this part of the rite semi-sacrificial as Menzies does.

"The meal (bread) is sufficient for making a union. . . . Jesus does not combine the bread and wine in one act; he puts the stress upon the wine: the sacrifice is added to the meal."

Montefiore thinks that some such idea as that of the covenant in Ex. 24:8 was doubtless in the mind of the writer of I. Cor. 9:25 and of our verse in Mark.

"Whether Jesus intended such a reference is far more doubtful even if he spoke part of the verse. . . . We may hardly assume that this communion ceremony was not performed by Jesus with the feeling and because of the feeling that his death was nigh."

Of Matthew's addition 'for the forgiveness of sins', Montefiore says this "is certainly not to be ascribed to Jesus. The conception of his death as a sin offering only arose after he was dead." He would also agree substantially with Hawkins (though on different grounds) that Luke's story of the Last Supper is substantially Paul's or at least Pauline.

It is hard not to see later ritual and interpretation read into the records of this scene so sacred to the Christian. Though Jesus may have felt that his death was nigh, it is hard to believe that he gave it sacrificial significance. As a simple communion of friends, though the host was the Great Friend, it fits better with the picture of this whole period. The disciples certainly did not realize that Jesus' death was imminent. He had dark forebodings and pictured death in the symbolism of life-giving.

Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, Mk. 14:33-36, paralleled in Mt. 26: 38-39 and Lk. 22:42-43, is the last word we have from him prior to the cross itself where he speaks of his death. To Menzies, it is a time of anguish for Jesus and he draws a compelling picture of the Master in his anguish and suffering. He meets the dark hour

"with a sense of weakness and helplessness, calling out for God. . . . The horror of the situation laid hold on him as he felt the moment approaching when he must be subjected to physical violence which must end in his death. . . . What more entered into his thoughts, the evangelist does not enable us to judge. Far from hiding his distress, he tells them of it quite simply and frankly. . . . The very extremity of mental suffering has taken hold of him. . . . Luke omits the verse which shows the Savior in his weakness; Matthew changes 'fear' into 'grief' The general purport of his prayer was that the hour, the critical hour, the hour of death might be spared him. This is what weighed upon his mind. . . . and in this distress of mind we have to recognize not a mere ordinary shrinking from pain and violence, though this also, no doubt, was there, but more the strain of the dark problem presented to the mind of one who believed himself to be God's elect and the destined ruler of God's Kingdom, by the thought that he must die, his destiny all unaccomplished."

Montefiore says,

"The details of this exquisite story may not be pressed but it may well have a historic basis. The disciples may have seen that Jesus was wrestling in prayer; they may have perceived that he was in trepidation and sore mental distress; they may have noticed that at the moment of arrest, before they left him, he was perfectly collected and calm. Upon this knowledge, the story, as we have it now, may have been built up The feelings of Jesus are drawn out with great delicacy and charm by Menzies in his admirable commentary; it is only on re-reading it that one sometimes asks: does not its author expound and know too much."

This scene certainly marks the great crisis for Jesus.

Admitting only the bare skeleton which Montefiore thinks authentic, without a word from Jesus, there is enough to show the manner of his struggle and his conquest. Menzies' picture is beautifully drawn and it does not imply more than seems probable, except perhaps that even here Jesus

does not realize that his death is inevitable. He saw it all too clearly as practically assured. He revolted from it but from the depths of his life came the cry, 'Not what I will, but what Thou wilt'. He was resolved. His calmness is marked after the agony of prayer. If death is to come, he is ready to meet it. It never entered his mind that if he did die, he would be offering himself as a sacrifice -- a ransom. That is absolutely untenable.

The last section for study, Jesus' words from the cross, are recorded in Mark 15:34 and Mt. 27:46, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?' Luke does not record this saying and Matthew and Mark do not record the one Luke knows.

These words are the opening sentence of the twenty-second Psalm. Menzies thinks that this quotation, the

"last and only words of the Savior on the cross, does not enable us to infer what was in his mind at the time. . . . The twenty-second Psalm, while it opens with a cry like that of despair, is not by any means a Psalm of despair, but of help and salvation coming to one brought very low. Even the opening words are an appeal to God and a confession that no help is looked for but from Him alone."

Montefiore recognizes the words as from the Psalm but thinks they connote only despair. Pfleiderer thinks they are,

"confirmatory evidence that Jesus had not expected to meet death at the hands of his enemies, but hoped to the last to be delivered by God, that all the predictions of his death given by the Evangelists are unhistorical, and finally, that Jesus did not think of the Messianic Kingdom as a heavenly kingdom, nor as a spiritual kingdom to be established on earth when He returned from heaven but simply as a realization of the prophetic ideal of the Reign of God in a religious-social reorganization of the Jewish people."

Neither view is quite adequate. The words do show deep despair, but likewise an unshaken faith in God. They signify Jesus' feeling that his task remained unaccomplished but that that task was the kingdom which Pfleiderer pictures does not follow. Whatever it was, he knew it absolutely as God's will for him. Of his anguish at leaving it so obviously unaccomplished, who can know. To Jesus, the cross must have spelled failure.

It may be held purposeless to have gone with such detail into the opinions of scholars on the passages in question. Not so. They represent the material from which this view has been drawn. To state a position without either such a painstaking survey or a first-hand study of the problem involved (a lifetime task and more), would be meaningless. The second alternative was impossible. The first alone remained. The preceding comments reflect its application.

Interpretations of the death of Jesus were later mixed with the fact of death, and inevitably so. That which most readily carries the conviction of reality is human experience. Who shall say that the Christians, living at the time when the New Testament was being written, had not experienced a something, the reality of which took the world by storm. Their experience grew out of the cross of Jesus and the events there centering. It had not, could not, come before the fact that made it possible. The writers of the New Testament, of the Synoptic Gospels in particular, could not do otherwise than express the reality they knew in the terms

of their knowing; and their terms were not those of Aristotlean logic or modern empirical science. The conscious effort here has been to separate fact from interpretation. Neither one is lost; each can stand alone. Neither one is discredited, though the separation is a reality in the scientific sense only; a convenient analysis for the purpose of a better understanding and a more accurate study. The results of such an analysis are not negative. They represent but half the study which is completed in the synthesis.

Briefly stated, these are the findings:

1. In depicting his future, Jesus counted death as one of the possibilities, howbeit a remote one.

2. When forced upon him as practically the unavoidable outcome of his chosen purpose, he accepted it as a final expression of self-giving, self-forgetting service.

3. When he did come to die, his thought was for the great task to which he had dedicated his life and which by his death, he was forced to leave unaccomplished.

Theories of the Atonement have grown, century after century, upon these words of Jesus. What has become of the words here? The ideas of nineteen centuries have been drawn aside like a veil and behind them -- only this. As the Roman found the Holy of Holies, so some will find this -- empty. It is not so. In stripping off from the living facts the now dried husks of first-century thought, the facts do not suffer unless the present viewpoint has been entirely missed.

The cross is significant, not because of what Jesus said about it, but because of what he was and did. He knew that the high aim which fired him was of God. He devoted his life to that creative purpose.¹ In himself he knew lay the power for its realization. As he set himself to bring it about, he weighed the means at his disposal, rejecting or accepting according to the standard of his ideal. When he first told men of the great purpose of his life, it was phrased in the familiar words of the great prophet of his people,

'The spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because He anointed me to preach good tidings to the
poor:
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captive,
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'

(Is. 61: 1 f., quoted from Lk. 4:18-19)

On the way to his ideal, his life never wavered from this pattern. It became more and more the perfect expression of his mission. Throughout life, the means remained inseparable from the mission. The redemptive motive alone could worthily express that creative purpose. Even in Gethsemane, realizing to what this course led, he could not give it up. He knew he had chosen God's task for him. He knew he had chosen the only way, his Father's way. When his great work, opposed by the earth-bound lives about him, ended on the cross, could he restrain the cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

1. It does not come within the scope of the present study to define what Jesus meant by the Kingdom of God.

The Earliest Idea of the Cross

Before considering Paul's conception of the cross, it will be necessary to examine the attitude of pre-Pauline Christians toward it. Even yet there is no scarcity of hints that he and not Jesus is the founder of Christianity. Did he manufacture his religion of the cross out of whole cloth or had he real ground for making Christianity into what he did? This question resolves itself into two others. How had pre-Pauline Christianity (i.e. between the resurrection and the beginning of Paul's ministry) regarded the cross? What new factors determined the trend of Pauline development? The former will be discussed here, the latter in the next section.

Three sources supply information regarding this earliest period: the Synoptists' Second Source, Mark's passion narrative and other relevant material, and the early chapters of Acts ("First Acts", following Torrey's division). Certain facts have been stated already in anticipation of this discussion; the Apostles made the resurrection the main-stay of their preaching; they accounted for the death of Jesus by appealing to divine ordinance, quoting the Old Testament for their authority; the cross, in relation to the resurrection, took an entirely secondary place; it was generally looked upon as a scandal, a crucified Messiah being an impossible paradox.

To the Jews, the crucifixion had been but the wrath of God poured out on an impostor. The real problem lay in the reconciliation of the two ideas. The early chapters of Acts show that the Apostles took the attitude that Jesus was indeed the Messiah but had not yet appeared as Messiah.

Both Peter (3:22) and Stephen (7:37) speak only of Jesus as a prophet whom God had promised to raise up. His coming as Messiah was yet to be. Peter's argument is probably representative. He cites the Old Testament to prove that the last days are at hand (2:16 f); he then argues that this Jesus, because of his wonderful resurrection has proven his superiority over his father David (2:24 f); that, being at the right hand of God, he has sent the Holy Spirit (prescient of the end) which the Jews now witness (2:33-4); therefore he is coming again for he is 'both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified'. Stephen takes the same attitude and closes his fatal address with the words, 'Behold I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God' (7:56). Jesus the prophet had come. Jesus the Messiah was soon to come.

The Second Source supplies some interesting material which just conceivably might have been used in proving the same point from Jesus' own words and which throws some light on the early Christian mind. The temptations of Jesus are fully recorded. He had been tempted by Satan to try other ways for bringing in the Kingdom, but he had chosen the only way. John had asked him, 'Art thou he that cometh or look we for another?' He concludes his answer 'blessed is he who-soever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me', in other words, who is not offended or repulsed by the idea of a humble, serving, crucified Messiah. In this same strain he said, 'He

that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted'. As to the coming of the Kingdom, he said, 'Go and preach, saying, that the Kingdom of God is at hand', which is exactly what the disciples believed and preached. His Messianic coming would be unheralded. 'As the lightning cometh forth from the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall be the coming of the Son of Man.'.

But what of the cross? The author of the Second Source (as B. H. Streeter suggests) "perhaps was a little glad not to dwell on it." He did not need to do so if, as has been suggested here, he wrote within a decade or two after the event and was conscious of the living tradition. With Mark, it is different. His purpose was to present a history of the life and death of Jesus. Along with that history, he also included a certain amount of commonly accepted interpretation simply because he was using the language of his day in writing to men of his day. Thus in the early Apostolic period, the death of Jesus had been conceived of in sacrificial terms. It was a ransom for many; the (new) covenant in his blood; a statement made more specific in the First Gospel by the additional qualification 'which is poured out for many for the remission of sins'. No doctrinal basis is to be seen. It is not more than a feeling expressed. The real spirit of the time is more expressive of the cross in life than in words. A recent writer has put these words into the mouth of

Mary Magdalene,¹

"Could I be happy if Jesus was really dead, if he was only a dreamer and his vision of the kingdom impossible? Others have seen him too. Men everywhere are asking what has happened to us. . . . Peter is altogether changed. People are asking 'How have these barbarous and contemptible people suddenly become wise? Who has given them this? How have they been instructed? Our minds are fervent like a fire that burns. . . . Would Peter spread the good news with such fire despising death, for a dream? They say he was born amongst us, and grew up with us, and was feeble of understanding, but that now he is inspired, and men hear from him things that enrich them and make life great and noble. Can this be without the finger of God? . . . There is a power within me that forces me to go on, that makes me want to suffer everything for everybody."

This rings true to the time. It was not without reason that men, looking upon these "barbarous and contemptible people," marvelled and took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). Surely God had visited and redeemed his people through Jesus, the Messiah. It were better to modify Streeter's statement. It was not altogether a conscious avoidance of the cross as a scandal which makes the earliest records so consistently silent. It was rather that the cross was swallowed up in the wonder of its reversal. To these early Christians, if ever to any, Jesus was, to use the words of Phillips Brooks, "not essentially a deed-doer, nor a word-sayer, but a life-giver."

1. By an Unknown Disciple, p. 243 f.

Paul's Doctrine of the Cross

No matter what the point of departure in a study of the Pauline letters, sooner or later Paul's own personal experience must enter. It cannot be avoided for in it are the beginnings of his theology. To start with Paul himself, then, seems, altogether the most fruitful procedure. Paul was a "twice-born" man. The record of his conversion on the road to Damascus is a most reasonable account. Indeed, to rule it out as myth, robs the whole of Paul's later life of its reasonableness. Modern psychology is a welcome helper in voiding the necessity for a long discussion of the facts of the case.

"Paul checked his revelation by the rest of his reflective and emotional life, rationalized it, and found in fact that it was no odd or stray addition to his outfit, but a key that unlocked for him the meaning of his own experience, the meaning of Israel's history -- patriarchs, prophets, and psalmists, and the purposes of God for the whole of mankind. 'It pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son to me', so says Paul to the Galatians (1:15-16). . . . He knew at once that a great change of life was before him."¹

Here, then, is the foundation of his new life. From thenceforth he is the 'bond servant of Jesus Christ', ready to "suffer everything for everybody" that, 'at all costs', he 'might save some'.

The correspondence with Thessalonika shows an undercurrent of thought very similar to that outlined for pre-Pauline Christianity. He speaks of the Christians as waiting

for the coming of the Son of God "from heaven whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come" (Thes. 1:10), marking his ready recognition of Jesus as the Messiah. The early urgency of the Apostles appears in the statement "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying? Are not ye before our Lord Jesus at his coming"(1. Thes. 2:19)?--brands, indeed, plucked from the burning. The hope of the immediate appearance of Jesus as Messiah is reflected in his words of comfort regarding the dead in Christ (I Thes. 4:13-18), and in II. Thes. 2 where he gives reasons for steadfastness and patience. The keynote of the message, however, is the plea that these people, who have received the gift of the Spirit, manifest the same gifts of the spirit as do Paul and his fellow-workers, that they may be ready for the glorious coming of their Lord. There is only an implication of the later doctrine so closely associated with the name of Paul. When the Messiah comes these people will not be subject to the "wrath" of God. They have obtained salvation through their Lord Jesus Christ who died for them (I. Thes. 5:9-10). Thus his hope and theirs rests upon the same grounds on which he later builds more explicitly.

When Paul later says to the Corinthians "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (I Cor.15:3), the context shows that he places this in the same piece with the early teaching which he had received from those who had preceded him. He authenticates himself with the Galatians by showing how he conferred with "them who were of repute" (Gal. 2:2),

meaning, of course, the original disciples, lest he have been in error at any point; as he says, "lest by any means I should be running or had run in vain." Paul evidently thought he gained less than he gave. They had nothing to give him but "contrariwise" (Phil. 2:6-7), for as he says, the real basis of his message was not "after man. For neither did I receive it from man nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12). Thus he places the emphasis upon his own personal experience and whatever he later makes of the good news, it is a generalization of his own experience.

He differs from the disciples in having known only the risen Jesus (I Co. 15:18). He had not known him in the flesh. To him, as has been shown, the identity of the two was patent but it was the risen, glorified Christ alone whom Paul had known personally. It is not surprising, then, that he was able to do that which for the disciples was wellnigh impossible. His own experience before Damascus enabled him to explain the cross.

"It is no longer a stumbling block as he says it remains to the Jews, who missed its meaning; he holds its meaning, and it becomes for him the criterion by which everything in heaven and earth and history is judged. The "suffering" of Christ, a scandal to the Gentile philosopher as well as to the Jew, becomes the very thing that makes him Christ, the proof of his Messiahship, the revelation of his nature, and his real and eternal glory."¹

1. Glover, Paul of Tarsus, p. 69.

The terms in which he speaks of this greatest work of Jesus are varied. He uses the old terminology of Jewish ritualism. God sent Jesus forth to be propitiatory (Rom. 3:25); our passover also hath been sacrificed, even Christ (1. Cor. 5:7); he made peace through his blood (Col. 1:20); Christ gave himself up for you, an offering and a sacrifice to God (Eph. 5:2). Again he turns to the legalistic terminology of his Pharisaic past. Christ becomes a curse for us (Gal. 3:31); God blots out the bond that was against us by its ordinances (Col. 2:14); justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:24). Are these ideas fundamental to Paul's contention? Clearly not. If he is understood at all, here is a case of the new wine bursting the old skins. He uses constantly the old terminology, but his thought clearly transcends it. Law and sacrifice, stock in trade of Pharisee and priest could not hold the thought of Paul. A redemptive motive has been attributed to Jesus in these pages. It activated the early Christians. It probably comes nearer Paul's idea of the death of Jesus than the rest of his Jewish inheritance. Lake thinks the idea of the suffering Servant of Jahveh served as the natural bridge for the development of Christian teaching as to the death of Jesus,¹ and we find Paul readily using this bridge. Whoever may have been in the mind of the one who wrote,

"He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities Jahveh hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:4-6),

1. The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul, p. 409.

there is present at least a recognition that there may be a suffering which is not penal but vicarious. Of this one, the writer continues,

"He shall divide the spoils with the strong because he poured out his soul unto death and, (while he) was numbered with the transgressors, yet he bore the sins of many and made intercession for the transgressors."

Here, as Ropes says,¹

"centuries before Christ, the suffering of the servant of the Lord . . . is apprehended as an expiation or means of securing forgiveness for others' sins. In other Jewish writings, the thought of vicarious expiation is found. Thus the treatise called the Fourth Book of Maccabees says of the Maccabean martyrs, 'They became as it were a vicarious expiation for the sins of the nation, and through the blood of those Godly men and their atoning death, divine providence saved afflicted Israel!'"²

Is this what Paul meant? Did he identify as Stephen did, the suffering of Jesus with that of the long line of prophets who for Israel had given themselves to this redemptive work? This, assuredly, he meant, but more also. The whole problem goes back to the "Slough of Despond" which Paul so vividly portrays,

"I am carnal, sold under sin. . . . For not what I would do I practice, but what I hate, that I do. . . . I know that in me dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me but to work that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practice. . . . I delight in the law of God after the inward man but I see a different law . . . warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. . . . So then, I of myself, with the mind, indeed, serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin. Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" (Rom. 7:17-25).

1. The Apostolic Age, p. 146.

2. 4 Maccabees 17:22, cf. 27-29.

Beside this statement another must be placed by way of contrast. "If any man seemeth to have confidence in the flesh, I yet more; as touching the law, a Pharisee; as touching the righteousness which is in law, found blameless" (Phil. 3:4-6). Yet withal God, as Paul found, could not count as righteousness this greatest of personal attainments. His own soul had been haunted by the fact that, regardless of the law, he was dead"--dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1). It was hard for Paul to give up the Pharisaic legalism. It was his Jewish heritage to know, not "le bon Dieu" or Omar Khayyam's "Good Fellow" but 'the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up', to know Jahveh of hosts exalted in justice, God, the Holy One showing Himself holy through righteousness. Knowing a God like that, he could not help but see his own utter inability to measure up to that righteousness with so base a betrayer in his own nature. God could never justify him on the basis of what he willed but did not. He was responsible for his own sin and God could but condemn -- had already condemned him to death. Being a Jew, Paul knew this as true of his people as of himself. Being familiar with Grecian or so-called 'heathen' life, he knew it, at least more obviously true for the Gentile world. So it was before Damascus. Thereafter all was changed. The new life he knew became the proof of his forgiveness. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom 8:16). But how did it come to be? Paul says "God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while

we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8).

Paul's own desire had remained the same before as after Damascus. He had willed to be righteous with the righteousness of God. He knew that before the righteousness of God he stood condemned, but in Christ, God reconciled the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:19). God's justice was not the less, man's own righteousness not the more. To square the account, "the bond that was against us (Col.2:14) is blotted out through Jesus." The old skins burst again.

"The cross did something and did it so thoroughly that it made men's existing conceptions of God's judgment seem antiquated. It took at once the central place in history, in human outlook, in the universe, which had been held by the Great White Throne. . . . The problem was to square moral instinct with grace. . . . The Cross revealed at once the brightness and warmth of God's love and the horribleness of sin, and if man accepted the love of God, as a result he could not forget how exceedingly sinful sin had been shown to be. A service done for him by God in Christ, at the price of so much suffering and humiliation, a forgiveness that cost God so much, could never leave a man capable of thinking lightly of sin. Christ was indeed putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and for all time, sin, the record of the broken law, remained 'nailed to His cross' (Col. 2:14), as Paul says. The cross shows them both nailed up, Christ and sin, a 'placarding' (Gal. 3:1) at once of the two supreme factors in a moral universe, God's love and sin's hateful-ness. No wonder that for Paul there was no getting away from the cross, no transcending of it for a higher view of God; there was no higher view of God for him because there was no truer or more essential revelation of God."¹

This, of course, is no rationalistic proof. It is rational because it meets the facts of experience and for no other

1. Glover, Paul of Tarsus, p. 88 f.

reason. It is an utter break with the conception of a God whose chief relationship to man was that of Judge. In reality, it all depends upon Jesus himself and what Paul knew him to be. He is the Son of God revealing the Father, being in the form of God, yet was made in the likeness of men (Phil. 2:508), this is his evaluation of Jesus. God, then, being like him, all is explained for him, and this is not the least of the debt Christianity owes Paul. Ropes' question is rich in meaning:

"Is it fair to see here the result of the process by which through the thought of a God needing to be appeased there came into the faith of the world the conception of a God who is love, the Father whom Jesus had known?"¹

Jesus told men God was like that and Paul came, in himself, to know God to be that.

Paul centers all his theology in this fact of redemption or justification. It is assumed to begin with and with it all other ideas must mesh. If it could be given a rational backing -- (a thing which Paul nowhere attempts) it might be this: Man's sin is misery and failure for himself. For God, revealed in the Passion and death of Jesus, it is real suffering. Man cannot but be condemned for his sin and the penalty, which Paul once thought must be paid by man, is rather paid by God in his suffering.

1. The Apostolic Age, p. 147.

From Paul to John

It is interesting to note the relation of Pauline thought to that in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The authorship of this Epistle is an open question. It is distinctly not Pauline, yet it is in close harmony with some of the later ideas which Paul expresses and, in a way, stands between him and the Johannine writings. The similarity does not extend to the significance of the death of Jesus. In Hebrews, the symbolism of sacrifice predominates over all others and reaches the climax of its New Testament development. Though the church has drawn largely on this Epistle, its language must be recognized mainly as pure metaphor used to convey spiritual truth. Paul, as has been shown, uses sacrificial terminology. The four outstanding instances (1 Cor. 5:7; Col. 1:20; Rom. 3:25; Eph. 5:2) have already been mentioned. In each case it is evident that the reference is an incidental illustration. With the writer of Hebrews, the occasional becomes the point of departure for a full interpretation of Jesus' life and work. No doubt to an age not unfamiliar with the scenes of animal sacrifice, the writer's argument would have more meaning and force than to-day. The thing he really does is to nullify the whole of the sacrificial system. His method is most telling. "It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin" (10:4); they cannot, as touching the conscience, make the worshipper perfect" (9:9). "In those sacrifices there is a remembrance

made of sin, year by year (10:3). "But Jesus, when he cometh into the world, he saith,

Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not,
In whole burnt offerings and offerings
for sin, Thou hadst no pleasure.

Then said he, Lo, I am come to do thy will'" (10:5-7).

In different words "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. In which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:9-10). Jesus, says this writer, is our high priest, yet, were he on earth, he would not be a priest at all for he had a more excellent ministry because he mediates a better covenant enacted upon better promises (8:1-6). The old sacrificial order is but a copy and a shadow of the heavenly things (8:5) which Jesus reveals. The reality is all spiritual, the shadow (not even an image) is in this world. Throughout, his argument is a reversal of what the present attitude would be. To-day the reality would be in the present world, the shadow in the spiritual. But be that as it may, his case was a strong one. That which the Jews had always considered the true religion was but a symbol or shadow of the better religion to come through Jesus. Be that as it may, the saving power of Jesus is not to be misunderstood.

"In the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying, and tears unto Him that was able to save him out of death, and having been heard for his Godly fear, though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that believe him, the author of eternal salvation" (5:7-9).

"Jesus died to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. What did he do? He identified himself with the will of God, and by so doing, cast such a flood of light on it as transfigured it. He prayed in Gethsemane what he taught his disciples to pray, 'Thy will be done.' That suggests our writer, is the center of the life and work of Jesus."¹

Here we do touch Paul. The same feeling predominates. Because Jesus in himself shows men how much God really cares about sin -- how much he suffers when men sin, and how much he loves in spite of sin, there is release for man. He may enter boldly into the presence of God by the blood of Jesus (10:19). This is, however, not pure Paulinism and, while showing the influence of the Alexandrian school, particularly in regards to the unreality of the physical world, it is no closer kin to the Johannine writings. The opening sentences give his attitude toward the person of Christ.

"God having of old times spoken unto the fathers in the prophets, hath at the end of three days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the ages, who being the effulgence (i.e. reflection) of his glory and the impress of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he made purification of sins, sat down on the righthand of the majesty on high." (1:1-2).

This, it is true, parallels to some extent the idea of the prologue of the Fourth Gospel, though without the explicit terminology. On the other hand, it is inherently Pauline for Paul too thinks and speaks of Jesus as the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4). The redemption is still more Pauline. It is from moral guilt and comes through the death of Jesus only. Man, however, through the things which Jesus suffered, becomes aware of the fact that God's attitude toward sin and forgiveness transcend the old revelation. Through Jesus came the new wine and the old bottles burst.

1. Glover, Jesus in the Experience of Men, p. 66.

The Cross in the Johannine Writings

The Johannine writings present an aspect of Christianity so far from the passionate outpourings of the poetic genius, Paul, that they seem to have little in common. Yet, like Paul, the author (or authors) speaks from a deep religious experience. Scott says of him, "The Gospel is a personal testimony of a profoundly religious spirit expressing in the language of a given time, the truth which must ever be vital to Christian faith."¹ With fine appreciation, Schmiedel says of the author,

"We may be sure that from the experience of his own soul he knew the value and benefits offered by religion. He is aware that the religious man has light to illuminate his path (12:35), and that he possesses truth -- truth which does not merely preserve him from error, but, more than that, delivers him from sin and leads him to holiness (8:32-35; 17:17-19). He knows of that faith which means resigning one's ego entirely to a higher personality; he knows of that depth of meaning imparted to life which implies that this truly begins at the moment of faith's awakening and cannot be interrupted by the death of the body; he knows of a spring of living water in his soul (4:14) and of the true bread from heaven which lasts for the life eternal (6:27,32); he knows of a peace which the world cannot give (14:27; 16:33), and of perfect joy (15:11; 17:13). In a word, he knows what it is to feel oneself a child of God and a friend of one's Master, instead of a slave who does not know what his Master is doing (15:14 f); he knows what it is for a man to feel at one with God and with his Savior."²

This experience is far from the blinding vision of the Damascus road yet he knows himself to be a twice-born man, born first of the flesh but again of the spirit. This re-

1. The Fourth Gospel, p. 372.
2. The Johannine Writings, p. 255 f.

birth is no redemption from moral guilt. It is birth into the real world -- birth from above (3:3), into the life of the spirit. From the world of illusion, like the men in Plato's cave, he is born into the true world of light. In this writing, it is vain to look for a reference to the cross as in any specific manner affording man salvation from sin. True, in the First Epistle it is written that the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin (1:7) and that he is a propitiation for our sins (2:2) but this is in no sense representative of the Gospel. All of the Epistles (save perhaps James alone) show how central a place the Pauline idea of Redemption from sin through the blood of Christ had come to take in the early church. John holds no such view in his Gospel though it may be that there is indirectly a symbolic recognition of this doctrine. Unlike the Synoptists, John makes the day of crucifixion that on which the Passover lamb was slain. So radical a change in the order of the Gospel narrative would not, in all probability, have occurred accidentally. Scott thinks that in this manner John includes the Pauline idea of the expiatory sacrifice which is most certainly taught in the Epistle but "in the true Johannine doctrine, there is no logical place for the view of the death of Christ as an Atonement."¹

As has been shown, the great keystone in Pauline thought is Redemption. John neither belittles nor neglects the importance of Paul's pivotal idea but he goes beyond it to another of enormous significance -- Revelation. With this

1. The Fourth Gospel, p. 226.

in mind, it is easy to see how the cross of Jesus could take so secondary a place in John's writings as it does, yet it is not secondary in the sense of being deposed and another idea put in its place. Rather it is that John takes the Jesus whom Paul had not known -- the historic Jesus -- and raises his life which Paul had neglected, to a place of equal importance with the eternal Christ. Paul by refusing to know anything but Christ and him crucified was enabled to give significance beyond the limits of time and space to the death of Jesus on the cross. The life of Jesus, however, takes its meaning only from the fact that it led to the cross. John goes back over the work of Paul to raise the whole life to the level on which Paul places the cross. What Paul does with the death of Jesus, John does with the whole life -- he has caught the significance of Jesus as a revelation of God. To Paul it is a marvelous thought that God in Jesus takes away his moral guilt and makes him a new creature. To John, it is equally marvelous that God Himself should, in the Logos Christ, walk the earth with men, revealing to them His life. He too is a new creature, being freed from darkness and impotency through the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

That the Fourth Gospel can be understood only in the light of the prologue has previously been stated. The Logos Christ is not the historic Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels. Neither is he the redeeming Christ of Paul who, through the speculations of the Gnostics, had become but a redeeming Spirit -- one among many aeons.

"The redeeming Spirit of the Gnostics had descended out of the pleroma of Deity into the earthly world without really becoming man; the Messiah of the Gospel tradition had risen in the faith of the Church to a heavenly quasi-deity, without really becoming God: the Johannine Logos Christology is the first and fundamental synthesis of this two-fold movement -- toward the incarnation of God and the apotheosis of man. His Christ is both equally: the "Son of God", the God Logos who has become man; the "Son of Man", the man Jesus who has become God."¹

In the prologue, the former aspect of this incarnate Logos Christ is presented and in the narrative of Jesus' life, the latter picture predominates. While indeed the Johannine Jesus is the man of Galilee, there are many characteristics which mark him as the incarnate Logos. He speaks of the glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world (17:5,24); his pre-existence is important because it gives him unique knowledge of divine things heard and seen in the presence of the Father (3:11,31 f); he needed not that any should testify to him concerning men, for he knew of himself what was in the man (2:25). Likewise, from the beginning, he knew of his death and when it should occur (7:9). These elements are so unobtrusive that it is really as a man that John presents Jesus.

The real point of difference is in John's conception of the supreme work of Jesus. As the incarnate Logos, he reveals God's will to the world. His task is to bring the world into conformity with that will, God himself being

"obliged to avoid contact with it. This he could only do by his own activity, and so, when upon earth, by his works and preaching. According to John he may be compared especially with the light that shines upon the world; and so the only important question is whether people turn to him or away from

him (13:19-21, 1:4-13). If they do the former (believe on him) they are quit of sin from that hour."¹

It is absolutely essential to realize the philosophical concept which lies behind this view. It drew a far sharper line between the physical and the spiritual worlds than does modern thought. To John, man's rebirth into the spiritual life is the all important problem, hence transcending Paul's idea of sin as moral guilt before God.

"The 'sin' from which Christ has offered deliverance is the natural incapacity of man to possess himself of higher life. He is separated from God, not by a principle of moral evil which has won mastery over him, but by the inherent constitution of his being, as a creature of this world, 'born of the flesh.'²

The cross then to John is no sacrifice to appease the "wrath" of an angry God. It comes to mean something quite different, yet not new, for already in Hebrews it was found to be dominant. The old order was but a shadow of the reality which comes now in Jesus and as the supreme act of his life, Jesus' death on the cross is as full of meaning for John as for Paul. It is the outstanding proof of Jesus' love for his followers. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (10:11-18). "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (15:13). To John this meant probably that Jesus, in his death, overcame the power of the evil one -- the prince of this world -- who, like the wolf at the sheepfold, met defeat though at the cost of the shepherd's life. It is

1. Schmiedel, The Johannine Writings, p. 250.

2. Scott, The Fourth Gospel, p. 222.

in this sense that the lifting up of Jesus draws all men unto him. It is the judgment on the prince of this world (12:31-32). With this conception is coupled another. It is the glorification of Jesus which the cross makes possible (17:5). He now can re-enter the larger life of the unseen world from which he came. By his death, he is released from the limitations of the world of flesh to continue, unimpeded, his great work (12:32). He has revealed perfectly and for all time the Father and he goes but to return, this time present everywhere (7:39; 16:7). The greatest significance probably comes out in his great prayer (17:19). "For their sakes, I consecrate myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth." This is truly sacrificial, as in Hebrews. Jesus devotes himself to death that the disciples may be rendered holy, set apart for the service of God. They are consecrated by his voluntary assumption of the cross. In this manner John stamps the cross as the supreme episode of the life of Jesus. The Gnostics had made it a mere form or illusion -- either God was not there (the Logos having left the man Jesus) or, being a physical death, it only seemed to be real. To John, however, "the Lord who has compelled his reverence and brought God near to him is not the incarnate Logos but Jesus Christ lifted up on his cross."¹

1. Scott, the Fourth Gospel, p. 233.

Summary

It is obvious that many of the conclusions here reached, differ from those accepted in the past as regards Jesus' death. To determine the real place of the Cross in the lives of these men who wrote so vividly about it has been the purpose consistently followed. There seem to be two ways of looking at the death of Jesus; the picture in the Gospels of Jesus dying on the cross is one view; the vision in the Apocalypse of the lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8) is the other. The first and all that goes with it of human experience might be called the 'human' view; the second, with its attendant doctrines, might be called the 'official' view.¹ The one does not preclude the other; they are complementary. The section treating of "Jesus and the Cross" has been an attempt to break through that earliest and rudimentary official view and see the Cross as Jesus must have seen it. He did not know it for a throne. Nor did the disciples. So far as they could see, at the first, it did not differ in quality from the death of the prophets of God whom the Jews had always murdered. Yet Jesus had always been, and through his resurrection remained for them the life-giver. In the idea of the Suffering Servant of Jahveh they came to see a vicarious and objective relationship between their sins and the death of Jesus. This thought Paul raised to its zenith. Glover is right in saying that for Paul the Cross

1. The distinction in this form is made by Dr. E. W. Lyman.

"took at once that central place which had been held by the Great White Throne." This is all very human. It is a record of actual experience generalized and the terms in which Paul explains it are picturesque and vivid. Their divergence proves them representative only in a general way. They are the words of the heart but they convince the head because their appeal to the heart is valid.

The Fourth Gospel, in its philosophical elements, rises above the limits of time and space to infinity. In this sense it is in more of an 'official' form than are Paul's writings. It is only because the human element is so vastly more predominant that the Gospel has maintained its place in the heart of Christianity. A transcendent God, for instance, who cannot come in contact with the world, is so hidden in the loving Father that the former concept is never thought of in relation to the Son who reveals the Father to man.

Paul's intensest feeling and thought were devoted to the preaching of the Cross. That fact has been emphasized to the exclusion, perhaps, of other elements of his Christology which might have been more perfectly traced in their development through Paul's later writings and Hebrews to the Johannine writings. To a certain extent it is not unfair to say that the Johannine theology is Paul's Christology full blown. It has been shown, however, that the experience of

John was not that of Paul and this introduces an element into the Fourth Gospel which takes it far from the simple message of Christ crucified.

The conclusions following from this analysis are:

1. The development within the first Christian century and practically within the same generation of two outstanding and widely different expressions of the meaning of the Cross.

2. Regardless of the difference of interpretation, background, and interest, both yield centrality to the Cross as the objective ground for their experience of new life.

3. Nineteen centuries unite in the testimony that, where they build on experience, both ring true to the original Fact.

CHAPTER II

A MODERN THEORY OF THE ATONEMENT

The Congregational Union Lectures
for 1875 delivered by Dr.R.W.Dale

Contents

Introduction

Review of the History and Words of Jesus

The Testimony of the Apostles

The Verbal Basis of the Doctrine of Atonement

Introduction

In the Congregational Union Lectures for 1875, Dr. R. W. Dale, under the title "The Atonement", sets forth a widely accepted theory of the Atonement. Roughly speaking the early chapters of his book go over the same ground which the preceding chapter covers, namely, the fact of the Atonement in the New Testament. He states his explicit purpose thus:

"In illustrating the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ and of his Apostles to the fact of the Atonement, my intention is simply to show that the Death of Christ is conceived and described as being the objective grounds on which we receive the remission of sins."

His attitude toward the terms descriptive of the Atonement which have been discussed at length in the latter part of the preceding chapter is similar to that of the present writer.

"These descriptions (Ransom, Propitiation, etc.) cannot be made the basis of a theory of the Atonement, but they are sure tests by which we may ascertain the accuracy of a theory. Unless our conception of the death of Christ gives a natural explanation of all the forms in which it is represented by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the writers of the New Testament, our conception is either false or incomplete."

This is fundamentally sound, providing of course it is recognized that no proposed theory can be so called in the sense in which the term is used in physical science. This position is clearly stated in the introduction to this study.

It would be interesting to dwell upon Dr. Dale's Introduction. He indicates certain difficult questions

which bear intimately upon a discussion of the Atonement; among them, the relation between the Son of God and the Father; the relation of the eternal word (i.e. Logos Christ) to the created universe, especially to the human race; God's relation to the moral law; and the nature and necessity of punishment. All of these factors inevitably enter and the author frankly admits them and their difficulty without a careful discussion of any of them. His assumptions do not always seem acceptable. By far the greater portion of this chapter is directed against the practice of doctrine building on the foundation of proof texts. This, of course, he absolutely rejects and takes the modern historic method in dealing with the material in the New Testament.

One difference between Dr. Dale's book and the present study is worthy of notice due to the progress of Biblical criticism which brings into question a number of his assumptions. "The Atonement" was written in 1875, fifty years ago. There is no consciousness of having broken in this study with the fine scientific, though wholly reverent spirit which Dr. Dale shows throughout his book. The difference is one not of personal attitude but of time of composition; fifty years does make a difference.

The first major objective, to which practically half of the book is devoted, is to establish the fact of the Atonement. The arguments are drawn from the following sources:

1. The history of our Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Dale has not made as much of this point as could be desired. He assumes

that Jesus was "God manifest in the flesh", and says, "St. Paul insists that in order to be saved I must trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, but when I see Christ, and know who he is, I cannot help trusting him for salvation". (p. 44) Where the present study would rest its whole case, Dr. Dale sees only evidence in confirmation of what Jesus says.

2. The testimony of our Lord. Here there is a sharp difference between Dr. Dale's and the present treatment of the Synoptic and Johannine Gospels and the evidence which they present. Though he recognizes a difference between them, it is evidently inconsequential for he freely quotes Jesus' words from the Fourth Gospel as historic. Likewise, as has been suggested, his whole treatment is far less advanced critically as compared with the treatment of the same material in the present study.

3. The testimony of St. Peter. Two sources are utilized by Dr. Dale, the early chapters of Acts and the First Epistle of Peter. No discussion of Peter's attitude toward the Cross has been undertaken in this study. Insofar as the present discussion of Acts and the section setting forth "The Earliest Idea of the Cross" covers the ground which Dr. Dale reviews, the facts are found to be the same though the explanation differs.

4. The testimony of St. John and St. James. In referring to John, Dr. Dale draws far more on the First Johannine Epistle than has been done here. He speaks in but a general way of the Gospel where, as has already been shown, the Cross

is less obviously the ground for the remission of sin. In the Epistle of James no mention is made of the cross. Dr. Dale reviews it and concludes that the Epistle as it stands, admits of none other than an objective view of Jesus' death as related to the remission of sin. Any other view would have altered the line of thought which James follows.

5. The testimony of St. Paul. More cognizance is taken of Paul's address in Acts than has seemed necessary in this study, but the attitude herein adopted toward the Epistles is practically the same as that of Dr. Dale.

As regards the fact of the Atonement established in the New Testament, there are four points of contact in this study with Dr. Dale's book: the history and testimony of Jesus, the testimony of Peter from the Acts, the testimonies of John, and the testimony of Paul.

Review of the History and Words of Jesus

In discussing the history of Jesus, Dr. Dale has taken the attitude that the chief object of Christ's coming into the world was

"that there might be a gospel to preach, . . . that what appears in the Gospels as history reappears in the Epistles as doctrine, that what appears in the life of Christ as fact appears in the teaching of the Apostles as theory. . . . that since the Lord Jesus Christ was the eternal word of God . . . and the express image of his person, the revelation of Truth contained in his life and death is infinite, . . . it remains and will remain forever, a perpetual fountain of light and glory. The words of Christ are great, but Christ himself is greater still. I propose,

therefore, to consider first of all, what the history of our Lord suggests concerning the unique character of his death. . . . It seems to me that the doctrine of the Atonement developed in the Epistles would be the only satisfactory explanation of some of the most remarkable phenomena recorded in the Four Gospels." (p. 46 f).

This is indeed vital and sound. In a recent work, Professor Driesch is quoted as saying,

"If Jesus represents a higher type of being, I would have to make room in my thinking that around that life would be the possibility of what might seem to us on a lower plane miracle."¹

So long as the author builds on the life of Jesus his treatment is admirable, but when he draws upon the recorded words of the "Four Gospels", the writer cannot follow him. He pictures Jesus as discussing with John the Baptist "the death by which he was to atone for the sins of men" (p. 52). The predictions of his death and resurrection already discussed in these pages are treated by Dr. Dale as the verbatim words of Jesus. Likewise, the vast majority of his quotations are from the Fourth Gospel and the exact historicity of this book is not admissible. This immediately rules out much of his evidence. The line between fact and theory, history and doctrine, has changed. The general conclusion which Dr. Dale draws centers about Jesus' last words from the Cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" He says,

"The Son of God is not only the victim of human malignity, in the very extremity of his woe. He is deprived of all divine consolations; he declares that God has forsaken him! I decline to

1. Stanley Jones, The Christ of the Indian Road, p. 159.

accept any explanation of these words which imply that they do not represent the actual truth of our Lord's position. . . . There are times when we mistake depression and gloom, which are the effect of purely physical causes, for the effect of the withdrawal of God's presence. Did Christ commit this mistake? I say, Impossible. I take the words in their clear and unqualified meaning. It is only by taking them in this way that very much that is contained in the previous history of our Lord becomes intelligible. He knew that he was to die that awful death; that he was to be forsaken of God in his last hours. This explains why it was that his mind was filled with the thought of his death from the very first, and why, as it approached, it filled him with dismay." (p. 61-62).

Dr. Dale says in effect that God actually turned his back on the Cross as Jesus suffered there and died. On the basis of the preceding chapter no such attitude is acceptable. The alternative offered is, as Dr. Dale himself says, impossible. It is unworthy of the Christ. Truly "this supreme anguish must have a unique relation to the redemption of mankind", and Jesus is indeed "involved in this deep and dreadful darkness by the sins of the race whose nature he has assumed", but how does it follow that God could turn his back upon the only being worthy, in himself, of the love of God? Yet he says that unless God did actually forsake Christ on the Cross, Jesus' words

"seem to be an appalling testimony. . . . that not even the purest goodness can secure for One who has assumed our nature the strength and peace which come from the perpetual manifestation of God's presence and love. Instead of revealing the infinite love of God refusing to forsake those who have sinned, it is an awful proof that he may forsake in the hour of their utmost and sorest need those who have perfectly loved and perfectly obeyed him."

Assuming, as Dr. Dale does, that Jesus knew from the beginning the death he should die, any other conclusion would indeed leave man without hope. It has been held here that Jesus did not know he was to die and had no such conception of the purpose of his death as appears in the Gospels and Epistles. Holding such an attitude, to accept Dr. Dale's interpretation of these words involves the acceptance of the dilemma which he holds out to those denying his interpretation.

"Instead of revealing the infinite love of God refusing to forsake those who have sinned, it is an awful proof that he may forsake in the hour of their utmost and sorest need those who have perfectly loved and perfectly obeyed him."

If God can forsake him, what of other men? It is obvious that, in treating the testimony of our Lord regarding the Cross, there is no common ground on which to meet Dr. Dale. An examination of Dr. Dale's conclusions on this issue (p. 91-92) may serve to make clear the difference.

1. "His death was neither incidental nor the inevitable consequence of his collision with the passions and prejudices of the Jewish people." On the basis of this study, Jesus' death was the inevitable consequence of the kind of life Jesus chose to live. As stated in the preceding chapter, he embodied in himself God's creative purpose and expressed it through the only motive possible to God -- redeeming love. His death resulted from his uncompromising attitude in the conflict between himself and the selfishness and hardness in men.

2. "The laying down of his life was a voluntary act."

Yes, in the sense in which this has been understood from the present evaluation of the Fourth Gospel which this statement reflects (10:17-18). As regards Jesus' own consciousness of his death as a voluntary act, he himself willed it insofar as he was incapable of compromise. He had rejected the possibility as the record of the temptations shows.

3. "To lay down his life was one of the ends for which he came into the world." This again reflects the "official" view of Jesus; it is true to the spirit of the Fourth Gospel.

4. "His death is immediately related to the deliverance from condemnation of those who believe in him, to the remission of sins, and the establishment of his sovereignty over the human race." Such is the testimony of Paul and John, representative writers of the New Testament, as their writings have been here examined. It has been verified by multitudes since their time, it is well authenticated by experience. The testimony is from everyone but Jesus.

5. "He accepted the testimony of John the Baptist that he was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and he associated his death with the sacrifice of the passover lamb on the night of the Exodus." Both of these conclusions are based on the Fourth Gospel and are here considered John's interpretation.

6. "He described his death as a death for others and more specifically he said that he gave his life a ransom for others." The first clause stands, but the specific statement, for reasons already shown, is not considered the testimony of Jesus.

Dr. Dale closes his chapter with these words:

"Let the Gospels stand alone, let the testimony of the Epistles be completely suppressed and the strong foundation of that conception of the Death of Christ which has been the refuge of penitents and the joy of saints for eighteen hundred years will remain unshaken. The words of Christ, and the words of Christ alone, are a sufficient vindication of the ancient faith of the Church."

Such a statement with the meaning which it conveyed for Dr. Dale, cannot be made in the present study. Yet the confidence remains unshaken. It is transferred from the words of Jesus to Jesus himself.

The Testimony of the Apostles

Dr. Dale's chapter on the testimony of St. Peter is introduced by an argument as to the sufficient inspiration of the Apostles of which no question is made here. Confidence in the Petrine address reported in Acts has been here expressed, though from a different line of approach than Dr. Dale takes. He faces the same facts discussed under the heading "The Earliest Idea of the Cross." "St. Peter does not tell the people that our Lord's death was an expiatory sacrifice" (p. 110). His contention is that Peter understood perfectly the meaning of the Cross but in speaking to the very people who had murdered Jesus,

"to have explained that the death of Christ was a Propitiation for the sins of the world would have perplexed the minds of those to whom he was speaking and broken the force of those terrible denunciations by which he endeavored to awaken their consciences and alarm their fears. There is true Christian faith

wherever the Lord Jesus Christ is acknowledged as 'Prince and Savior', the Founder of the Kingdom of heaven, the Moral Ruler of mankind, the Author of eternal salvation. That he atoned for sin on the cross is the explanation of the power which he has received to forgive sin; but a penitent heart may rely on him for forgiveness without apprehending the relation of his death to human redemption. . . . The faith of those who believe the Gospel as St. Peter preached it would receive no shock -- it would be complemented and perfected -- by the discovery that Christ, in whose name they trusted for remission of sins, had atoned, by his death, for the sins of the world." (112 f).

In this manner is explained the silence of Peter as to the fullest meaning of the death of Jesus. The presuppositions not being those of the present study, there exists no common ground for comparison. St. Peter was silent because he did not yet realize how vast the subject whereof he spoke. Yet Dr. Dale has expressed a view that is gripping. "A penitent heart may rely on him (Jesus) for forgiveness without apprehending the relation of his death to human redemption." What matter if Peter likewise knew not that relationship? He knew that his new life had come through his risen Lord and Master and as he had found, so others should find, life and joy and peace in him who had been crucified.

In dealing with the testimony of St. John, the author says,

"It is quite clear that the Gospel of St. John was written for those who had long been Christians. His catholic epistle has the same character. . . . It was not necessary to confirm them in their renunciation of Judaism, or to warn them against continuing in the practice of those coarse vices into which converts from heathenism were in constant danger of relapsing. . . .

Here and there we may detect the expression of St. John's antagonism to speculations -- vague and chaotic in his time -- which, in the next century, were developed into Gnosticism; but commonly his mind moves in calm and lofty regions of truth remote from the agitations of transient controversies." (p. 152).

Fifty years of study has brought a clearer understanding of the Gnostic movement and the extent to which John was dependent upon Gnostic philosophy for the substratum of his Gospel. In a way, this materially alters some of Dr. Dale's reasoning. As quoted above, however, he is in harmony with the present attitude of scholarship. But he draws primarily from the Epistle rather than the Gospel. Thus again a sound basis for comparison is lacking. It has been stated that the Epistle, and indirectly the Gospel, does teach the expiatory relation of Jesus' death to the forgiveness of human sin but that this is not the primary teaching of the Gospel. Whatever may be made of the atonement, is it not fair to say that John too, though he does not teach a Pauline redemption from moral guilt, understood the cross to be the objective means whereby a man experienced a new birth? He does not make man's part all and God's nil. Paul says, 'Have faith'. John says, 'Believe'; but surely to both of them "This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes."

In treating of St. Paul's testimony Dr. Dale finds in the facts practically the same general conclusions here outlined. It has been held that Paul's own experience was the authentication for his message of Redemption. Dr. Dale says the same thing in different words.

"He (Paul) declared that he had not received from man the gospel which he preached, neither was he taught it but 'by the revelation of Jesus Christ'. I suppose he meant that the full significance of our Lord's earthly history, the nature and laws of His eternal kingdom, were not made known to him by human teachers, but by the immediate illumination of the Holy Ghost."

His summary statement of Paul's testimony (p. 264) is quite adequate.

"The death of Christ, as the objective ground for the divine forgiveness of human sin, was the substance of St. Paul's preaching; it was the central idea of his theology; it was the spring of the mightiest motives by which he was animated in his Apostolic work."

In a masterly chapter, "Confirmatory of the Preceding Argument", the author reviews the historic development of the doctrine of the atonement and comes to the conclusion that

"the idea (of an objective atonement) is not the creation of dogmatic theology, nor does it depend upon dogmatic theology for its hold on the heart and faith of the Church. . . . The history of the doctrine is a proof that the idea of an objective atonement was not invented by theologians."

The Verbal Basis of the Doctrine of the Atonement

Dr. Dale makes one statement, however, which must be sharply challenged. He says,

"It is true, and the truth has great significance, that the craving for a sacrifice for sin is one of the deepest instincts of the religious life of the race.¹ It is also true that this craving is satisfied by the Christian Atonement. But that, apart from the clearest and most emphatic declarations of Christ himself and his Apostles, the Church should ever have supposed that his death could be the ground on which God forgives the sins

1. This statement is well attested by modern studies in the Philosophy and Psychology of Religion and Comparative Religion.

of mankind, is incredible. How could such an extraordinary supposition have originated?" (p. 209).

In other words (p. 209), "What we have to account for is this universal prevalence of the idea that . . . his death was the propitiation for the sins of the world." His proof follows this line. The Church from the beginning knew that the death of Christ was a great crime. At heart the message of Jesus was not hostile to the religious habits and traditions of the Jewish people; he did all in his power to avoid giving offense to the ecclesiastical leaders; he avoided giving any great alarm to the Roman civil authorities; and on the other hand, his whole life was an appeal to the very best in human nature. Every one of the more violent moves against him (including the fatal one originating in the resurrection of Lazarus) originated in a miracle which should have been recognized as a true sign of his place and right; he did only good and suffered for it.¹ His death was brought about by a deliberate conspiracy, a succession of atrocious crimes. As an analogy,

"suppose that, after the children of Israel had been in the wilderness for several years, a conspiracy had been formed against Moses, and that he had been deliberately and treacherously tortured and slain, because he refused to renounce his great claims as the divinely commissioned law-giver and chief of the nation. Can we imagine that within a few years after his death the Jewish people could have come to imagine that on the ground of the death of Moses God was willing to forgive all the sins they had committed since leaving Egypt?"

This, says Dr. Dale, is unthinkable. Rather

"would there not have been an annual fast, at which . . . the crime would have been confessed and divine mercy implored? . . . I can imagine prophet after prophet

1. It is unimportant in the general argument that Dr. Dale draws all his historic citations from the Fourth Gospel.

insisting on his suffering and death, in order to inspire the people with a fidelity to God like that which had been illustrated in the martyrdom of their great leader; and the church might have made a similar use of the crucifixion of Christ. It has made a similar use of his crucifixion." (p. 300-310)."

According to Dr. Dale, this is absolutely all the Church ever would or could have made of the death of Christ, but for one consideration, without which it would not be considered the propitiation for the sins of the world.

"I can account for the prevalence of that idea in one way, and only one way. It was a great and essential element in the original gospel which the Apostles were charged to preach to all nations. The Church received it from the Apostles. The Apostles received it from Christ."

Dr. Dale distinctly means that Christ taught the Twelve that the Son of Man should be delivered unto the chief priests and the scribes; and they should condemn him to death, and should deliver him unto the Gentiles, and they should kill him. And that his life should be a ransom for many, his blood poured out for many unto the remission of sin.

The analogy will not hold. Suppose Moses had even told the people that his life would be cut short by this conspiracy, conceived by Dr. Dale. Suppose he had told them that he gave his life a ransom for many or poured out his blood for many unto the remission of sins. Even then could it have resulted in more than its author imagines? This is indeed incredible. Dr. Dale here omits the great Fact which has always made the difference between the Christian atonement and that

held out by any other religion. The atonement is not possible without Christ. To go back to Professor Dreisch again,

"If Jesus represents a higher type of being I would have to make room in my thinking that around that life would be the possibility of what might seem to us on a lower plane miracle."

In Dr. Dale's own words, "Jesus was God manifest in the Flesh", yet he says, "I can account for the prevalence of that idea (that his death was the propitiation for the sins of the world) in one way, and only one way. . . . The Apostles received it from Christ." They did receive it from Christ, but not as Dr. Dale means it. It is rather as Paul says (Rom. 8:16), "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are children of God", or as in First John 5:10, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him, . . . and the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life and this life is in his Son." This reconciliation with God through the death of Jesus on the cross is indeed the "essential element in the original gospel which the Apostles were charged to preach to all nations", and it came through the deepest and most vivid experience of their lives. It was a reality because they lived it out and proved it so.

Dr. Dale's closing lectures, three in number, deal directly with his theory of the atonement. He starts with a question. "The fact that Christ died to make atonement for sin having been established, is it possible to construct a theory of the atonement?" Nothing is to be gained by

carrying further the review of Dr. Dale's lectures. The conclusions which he states and those stated in this study are not sufficiently in harmony to afford the possibility of slight alterations in Dr. Dale's theory to make it acceptable. Nothing constructive would be gained short of stating another theory of the atonement. One general objection to Dr. Dale's theory (indeed to his whole work) may be stated. He treats of God, not as Father but as the Moral Ruler of the universe. No theory of the atonement is adequate which neglects God's fatherly interest in the individual, his love for each of his children which Jesus emphasized. To insist upon God's love is not to imply that he is indifferent when his moral law is broken or that he will not punish men for the infraction of that law, that is, for their sins. No matter how God may be conceived, these things must be. Not to think the Fatherhood and love of God into any doctrine of Christianity is to ignore the factor which experience has proven most real and vital. When man comes face to face with his sin, Glover says:

"Conscience pitches the love of God too low. Jesus changes that; he is himself the guarantee for God, the pledge of God's love. The consequence is a great change of mind in the man. He moves over to God's point of view. He no longer wishes to escape the consequence of his actions. If the Father of Jesus makes a law, the man will now wish at all costs to maintain it, he will co-operate to the extent of wishing to bear the penalty that his Father thinks helpful to himself and others. But is this forgiveness? If the penalty is still to be borne? But what is the penalty when there is reconciliation? Is it a punishment if you wish it? Let him do what he will! The crop sown has to be reaped; but another will help in

the reaping; and it is something to work along with such a Friend even in so painful and humiliating a task. But it is man's experience that in this work, as in all work done for God and with God, the great Friend does the larger part."¹

This is man's most precious experience of God. Dr. Dale speaks of God as Father and of the love of God, but he never brings this love into his theory.

1. Jesus in the Experience of Men, p. 86-87.

CHAPTER III

THE CROSS IN PRESENT DAY EXPERIENCE

The Death of Jesus and the Modern World

Jesus and the Prophets

The Cross as a Revelation of God

The Cross in Present Day Experience

In its every page the New Testament is overshadowed by the Cross, glorified as in the objective means whereby life is renewed as by rebirth. The centuries echo the words "In the Cross of Christ I glory." But to-day men turn to the record of the past and read,

"Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood
Which calmed God's frowning face
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne
And turned the wrath to grace."

Or, again, that "God quenched the flaming sword of his anger in the blood of Christ." It is wellnigh with horror that the modern mind is repulsed from such conceptions of the death of Jesus. Past attempts to literalize the metaphors of New Testament imagery likewise fail to satisfy. Of them, Dr. Buckham says, "taken literally, they are mutually contradictory. Christ cannot be at the same time Ransom and Redeemer, Priest and Sacrifice, Propitiation and Advocate."¹

"One has but to ponder the pictures lying at the back of each of these words to realize this. No doubt there will be many who feel themselves unable to breathe much longer the hard atmosphere of Roman law courts and of the forensic theology born there, and these may be in danger of renouncing, with that metallic shell, the truth bound up in it. Even these will feel, however, that Christian experience answers easily and naturally to the great passages about the vicarious nature of Christ's death, then those passages are freed from forced interpretations."²

It is good indeed to say with Dean Bosworth,

"Fortunately the experience of moral redemption goes on generation after generation in the lives of

1. Christ and the Eternal Order, p. 136.
2. Cardinals of Faith, p. 88.

those who adopt the ideals of Jesus at any cost and let their affections follow him out into the unseen world, whatever be their attitude toward any one of the various 'theories of the atonement' that have been helpful at different periods in the long history of Christian experience."¹

The Death of Jesus and the Modern World

Perhaps the greatest break with the past has come through the present emphasis upon the social message of Jesus. In his characteristic style, Charles Reynold's Brown has clearly traced the contrasting ideas of past and present:

"The Master never prayed that his followers should be taken out of the world into some heaven of detachment from its sin and pain. He prayed, rather, that they should be kept from the evil of the world and be steadily engaged in a sturdy effort to overcome that evil with good. He put upon our lips those words which impel us to look up into the face of Infinite Perfection and say, 'Thy kingdom come.' We are to look for it and strive for it here and now. 'Thy will be done' here on earth as it is done in heaven! . . . 'The true mark of a saved man,' someone has said, 'is not that he wants to go to heaven but that he is willing to go to China, or to the slums of some great city or to the last dollar of his resources, or to the limit of his energy, in order to set forward the kingdom of God on earth.' The old, selfish, luxurious idea that a man's chief concern is to save his own soul and thus gain by his prudent piety a heaven of bliss, scarcely gets a rise out of the troubled sea of modern life."²

Enough, perhaps, has been said regarding Dr. Dale's lectures but the contrast between the widely accepted view of the Cross which he presents and the more socialized attitude of to-day may be well illustrated by comment upon one final quotation.

1. What it Means to be a Christian, p. 46-47.
2. Social Rebuilders, p. 9-11.

"The sins of men were the cause of the death of Jesus in a sense in which they were not the cause of the death of those whose fidelity to truth and to conscience, to the highest welfare of mankind and to the authority of God, has provoked the intolerance and vengeance of wicked men, and won for them the glories of martyrdom." (p. 313).

His attitude has been thoroughly discussed in the preceding chapter and the more acceptable view there suggested was that the sins of men were the cause of the death of Jesus in the same sense in which they were the cause of the death of the Prophets and Martyrs. The uniqueness of Jesus' death lies in the fact of what he was, not in the manner of his dying. He himself was Truth and Conscience; he embodied the highest welfare of mankind because his life was the perfect expression of human life; he was the authority of God because he was "God manifest in the flesh." Those with whom Dr. Dale compares him were only men. The best of them

"To the ancestral clod kin
And to cherubim;
Bred predelectedly
O' the worm and Deity."

If Jesus ever predicted his death, he did so in his scathing denunciation of scribe and pharisee.

"Woe unto you! Ye build the tombs of the prophets and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. So that ye bear witness against yourselves that ye are the sons of those who slew the prophets (now fulfill the measure of your fathers)!¹

This is the climax of the great invective against the religious leaders of the nation. The last count in the indictment is that they were about to complete the record

1. Quoted from Harnach, the Sayings of Jesus.

of their fathers by rejecting and persecuting the prophets of their generation (probably John, Jesus himself, and his disciples). The fact had sunk into the public mind that former generations had been guilty of this. "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." Jesus promises to make a test of this and foretells that they will go the old way and so declare their spiritual solidarity with the sinners of the past.

"Hast thou chosen, O my people, on whose party thou
shalt stand,
Ere the Doom from its worn sandals shakes the
dust against the land?
Never shows the choice momentous till the judgment
hath passed by."¹

In the same work Dr. Rauschenbusch says,

"We know that by constant common action a social group develops a common spirit and common standards of action, which then assimilate and standardize the actions of its members. Jesus felt the solidarity of the neighborhood groups in Galilee with whom he mingled (Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum). He treated them as composite personalities, jointly responsible for their moral decisions."²

The moral solidarity which he recognized in these smaller groups, he recognized in the national group and further,

"Jesus saw a moral solidarity existing, not only between contemporaries who act together, but between generations that act alike. Every generation clings to its profitable wrongs and tries to silence those who stand for higher righteousness. Posterity takes comfort in being fairer about the dead issues, but is just as hot and bad about present issues. The sons re-enact the old tragedies on a new stage, and so line up with their fathers. In looking back over the history of his nation, Jesus saw a continuity of wrong which bound the generations together in a solidarity of guilt."²

1. Walter Rauschenbusch, *The Social Principles of Jesus*, p. 172.

2. *Ibid*, p: 21:

3. *Ibid*, p: 22:

This is the meaning of his words,

"I send to you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them ye will slay and persecute; that there may come upon you all the blood shed upon earth from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharius, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."¹

How this conviction of individual responsibility for corporate guilt appeals to the present day is reflected in these words put into the mouth of one standing at the foot of the cross as Jesus suffered and died. After seeing the consummation of the tragedy, the sufferings of Jesus and the two thieves, and witnessing what passed between them and Jesus, this one is made to say,

"When I saw this, shame came upon me and an agony of remorse. For all my life I had seen such sights and had taken for granted that such men were worthy of death. Why, all Judea was dotted with crosses and on them men had died. In every country of the world such deaths were inflicted by those in power. Since the beginning of time it had been so. Man had always tortured man. Because of my neglect these things had been. I had agreed that that should be which need not have been. The anguish that man gives to man was my fault too. But Jesus had not been blind. He had seen the pain of man and had raised his voice against the cruelty, showing men the remedy. His message would have saved the world from such horrors. God spoke through him for his nature was greater than ours. But the great engine of government had caught Jesus and he was dying, and I was his murderer and the murderer of the men who died with him. Because of my blindness my friend must die. I turned my face aside and wept."²

To have slain the prophets was a crime which brought conviction (when the Jews could scan the events in the past) of a great sin against God. In them God himself had seemed

1. Harnack, the Sayings of Jesus.
2. By an Unknown Disciple, p. 234.

to focus his own light to the degree that their alloyed lives permitted. To have killed Jesus was the utmost crime because his life was unalloyed with the baser metal of humanity. In the recognition of the great principle of solidarity which Rauschenbusch so clearly phrases, the words of Jesus come to the men and women of this generation as though meant for them alone. Woe unto you! Ye say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. So that ye bear witness against yourselves that we are the sons of them that slew the prophets (now fulfill the measure of your fathers)!

It is not within the purpose of the present study to discuss the problem of sin. There is a present tendency abroad, however, which must be mentioned. Perhaps it is a reaction from the morbid contemplation of sin in which the past sometimes indulged. It is difficult to be sympathetic with Cardinal Newman in his pathetic question, "Would I be in safety were I to die tonight?" Perhaps it is the fallacious view of evolution which makes of all sin simply steps in moral progress. Whatever the cause, it has been voiced in the now famous words of Sir Oliver Lodge,

"As a matter of fact, the higher man of to-day is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment; his mission, if he is good for anything, is to be up and doing."¹

Walt Whitman also thinks rather slightly of sin,

"I could turn and live with animals, they are
so placid and self contained,
I stand and look at them long and long;
They do not sweat and whine about their condition.
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins."

1. Man and the Universe, p. 220.

Perhaps there are men who can hold such an opinion of sin and yet live the Christian life. Admitting the danger of a sweeping statement, the writer, in the face of the awful power of evil that masters men, would brand as driveling, with all the meaning that that word can convey, any such light view of sin. Men are not animals and cannot live "stupid as swine that wallow in the mire", trusting to the onward and upward progress of evolution to make things right. The least that can be said is this:

"We have reached the point when we feel that even though we ourselves may have been fortunate enough to have escaped those vices and crimes which are listed with the grosser sins of flesh, we all share in the guilt of a social order which occasions grief and pain, hurt and loss to millions of our less fortunate messmates at the board of life."

The common experience of multitudes is that of Paul, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Jesus' words are directed against this generation. In all the sins of the present age this generation stands united with those who slew the prophets and crucified Jesus. The depth of that crime can only come with its conviction to a healthy mind and it does come with the terrible conviction of a sin that is above forgiveness. In the clash of conflicting principles, men in the light of Calvary see that they stand with the forces of wrong against Christ's justice, with crafty subterfuge against Christ's truth, with predatory selfishness against the selflessness of Christ; they stand in company with those who put Jesus on the cross. When a man sees his life in perspective, and looks to Christ then he knows that in

the death of Jesus God was reconciling the world to himself. He knows; for the sense of guilt has gone from him. How his experience comes, he may not know, but,

"in that hour he has surrendered a self-principle that makes for increasing death, and he has embraced instead the Christ principle or spirit, which makes for increasing life.

"It may seem a trifling thing to see a man who has been facing west swing round upon his heel and face east. He stands in the same place: what has altered? Yet this is the difference, that whereas once he faced toward the approaching night, now he looks toward the awakening day. Is there no material difference between night and day? If a man walks west, will it make no difference from the result had he walked east? If a man walks with self, will it be much the same in the long run as if he had walked with Christ? Is there nothing to fear? Are there no terrible disintegrations possible -- things whatever they be, for which our fathers used the names which we have surely not outgrown: sin, death? No west, no east; no death, no salvation. But there is salvation, and a man is saved in the hour when he adopts in Christ the spirit that makes for day and life. Many are unable to record that hour, but the important matter is their conscious loyalty to the spirit of Christ. In that spirit a man is as one who faces east, and he is saved.¹

Jesus and the Prophets

Throughout this study reference has been made to the relation of Jesus to the Suffering Servant of Jahveh. Such a view of suffering had been impossible before the exile. Then had been prevalent the saying (Ez. 18:2), "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are on edge." All suffering had been penal and the moral order had no place for individual responsibility. The Exile was the suffering of the nation for past sin but the suffering was greater far than

1. Oswald W.S. McCall, Cardinals of Faith, p. 94-95.

the sin and the people said (Lam. 5:7) "Our fathers sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities." They were suffering vicariously and felt keenly the need of a new interpretation of their grief. The explanation offered by the great Unknown Prophet of the exile was that of the Suffering Servant of Jahveh. He might have been thinking of Jeremiah, the 'saving remnant' of the nation, or even of the whole of the chosen people of Jahveh. None of them, however, fulfil completely the wonderful picture of him who should suffer for the redemption of his people. That this explanation of the suffering of Jesus should be so close to the hearts of the early Christians, even to the Master himself, is not to be wondered at. The redemptive motive so filled his life, to the rejection of all others, that in the great order of the prophets Jesus inevitably takes his place as their great successor and the vindication of their vicarious suffering. What they with their lesser natures did imperfectly, Jesus, "God manifest in the flesh," did perfectly. It is from Jesus that men learn God's plan of world-redemption, learn to see that in their experience of suffering God manifests himself in redeeming power.

"The life and fate of these individuals anticipates the issues of history. This is the prophetic quality of their lives. Working out the moral and intellectual problems in their minds before the masses have realized them, they become the natural leaders in the fight, clarify the minds of others, and thus become not only forerunners, but invaluable personal factors in the moral progress

of the race. . . . 'The single living spirits are the effective units in shaping history; all common tendencies working toward realization must first be condensed as personal forces in such minds, and then by interaction between them work their way to general recognition.' (Lotze)

"Lowell's 'Present Crisis' is perhaps the most powerful poetical expression of the prophetic function in history.

'Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes -- they
were souls that stood alone,
While the men they agonized for hurled the
contumelious stone,
Stood serene, and down the future saw the
golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered
by their faith divine,
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to
God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's
bleeding feet I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the
cross that turns not back,
And these mounts of anguish number how
each generation learned
One new word of that grand Credo which in
prophet hearts hath burned
Since the first man stood God-conquered
with his face to heaven upturned.'"¹

It is in this experience that men to-day come to understand the cross of Jesus as the symbol of Christianity. Regardless of time or place, such experience speaks never better than to-day. It is bringing to the world at large a recognition of the supremacy of this motive above all others which man may choose to follow. Slowly, so slowly, the world of men, like a great ship, is responding to the hand of Christ upon the helm, against all the currents of evil which strive to stay it. Richard Watson Gilden has painted the vision splendid in these words:

1. Walter Rauschenbusch, The Social Principles of Jesus, p.176-177.

"'Twas said, 'When roll of drum and battle's roar
Shall cease upon the earth, O, then no more
The deed, the race, of heroes in the land.'
But scarce that word was breathed when one small hand
Lifted victorious o'er a giant wrong
That had its victims crushed through ages long;
Some woman set her pale and quivering face,
Firm as a rock, against a man's disgrace;
A little child suffered in silence lest
His savage pain should wound a mother's breast;
Some quiet scholar flung his gauntlet down
And risked, in Truth's great game, the synod's frown;
A civic hero, in the calm realm of laws,
Did that which suddenly drew a world's applause;
And one to the pest his lithe young body gave
That he a thousand thousand lives might save."

Not only has this idea struck deep roots into Christian soil,
it is gripping the non-Christian world with an irresistible force.

"Arthur Jackson of Manchuria, the athlete,
scholar, physician of England, goes down to the
railroad station of Mukden, and there examines
hundreds of Chinese trappers, many of whom are
stricken by the plague. At last Jackson himself
dies of the plague; and non-Christian Chinese
papers commenting upon his death use words like these:

'Now he has given his only life for the lives
of others, we see that he was a true Christian, who
has done what Jesus did thousands of years ago.'

'He did the will of God, to die for all.'

'His death in labouring for our country was
actually carrying out the Christian principle of
giving up one's life to save the world.'

And the Viceroy speaking at his memorial
service closed with these words:

'O spirit of Dr. Jackson, we pray you intercede
for the twenty million people of Manchuria, and ask
the Lord of Heaven to take away this pestilence, so
that we may once more lay our heads in peace upon
our pillows.'

'In life you were brave, now you are an exalted
Spirit. Noble Spirit, who sacrificed your life for us,
help us still, and look down in kindness upon us all!'"¹

1. William J. Hutchins, The Religious Experience of Israel, p. 341-2.

This experience is being repeated in India.

"In an article written by a Hindu in an extreme nationalist paper there occurred this sentence, 'Calvary, where another great of the East has suffered martyrdom for the sins of the world, has to-day its counterpart in Yerravada, where our Mahatmaji suffers martyrdom for the thralldom of the world. Just as Calvary stands for the world sinners, so Yerravada stands for the world's downtrodden.' Yerravada is the prison where Gandhi was imprisoned. It is not a question whether these are real parallels or not, the significant thing is that the Indian people are seeing them."¹

Jesus' death was, then, only like the death of these others? Insofar as all, like Jesus, are incarnations of God this may be said; but the gulf between him and the best of men stretches wider and deeper as men come to know him better. He is an Ultimate and his death has the same quality. "As long as God dwells with men, the ministry of Jesus is a temporary picture of a permanent truth."²

The Cross as a Revelation of God

The suggestion has already been made that the heart is left cold and the mind unconvinced by Dr. Dale's lectures because he fails to reach out into the very heart of God for that which more than all else represents his attitude toward his erring and wayward children. As Dr. Glover says, "the first thing that Jesus had to do, . . . was to induce men to re-think God. Men, he saw, . . . need . . . to rediscover him, to re-explore him, to live on the basis of relation with

1. E. Stanley Jones, *The Christ of the Indian Road*, p. 59.
2. O. W. S. McCall, *Cardinals of Faith*, p. 92.

God."¹ The fundamental trouble with the men of Jesus' age seems to have been a failure rightly to grasp the true nature of God. It seemed hard for them to know just how far they could count on him. This same doubt is reflected in the medieval theology where the God men postulated was the God of the Old Testament. This same doubt haunts men to-day. It is hard to believe that behind this materialistic twentieth century world, with its demonstrable law, its rank injustice, its spiritual shallowness, "standeth God within the shadows keeping watch above his own." In Jesus, in his Cross, men come to a new experience of God.

"The distracted and doubting mind turns toward Jesus with relief and says, 'If God is like that, he is all right.' As Christians we affirm that he is -- that he is Christlike in character, and we say it without qualification and without the slightest stammering of the tongue. We believe that 'God is Jesus everywhere' and Jesus is God here -- the human life of God.

"If God thinks in terms of little children as Jesus did, cares for the leper, the outcast, the blind, and if his heart is like that gentle heart that broke upon the cross, then he can have my heart without reservation and without question."²

Again it is the reality of the Cross revealed through the medium of human experience that appeals to the hearts and minds of to-day. The very heart of God is laid bare in the love of the mothers of men.

"You struggled blindly for my soul
And wept for me such bitter tears
That through your faith my faith grew whole
And fearless of the coming years.

For in the path of doubt and dread
You would not let me walk alone,
But prayed the prayers I left unsaid
And sought the God I did disown.

1. The Jesus of History, p. 70.

2. E. Stanley Jones, The Christ of the Indian Road, p. 35.

"You gave to me no word of blame,
But wrapped me in your love's belief,
Dear love, that burnt my sin like flame,
And left me worthy of your grief."¹

It was this God-like love of the mother of St. Augustine which inspired the Bishop of Hippo. She had come beseeching his prayers for her skeptical son, for whom she poured out her life before God. "Depart good woman," said the Bishop, "the child of so many prayers cannot be lost." Augustine wrote in his Confessions (IV, 14,21), "One loving heart sets another on fire." Was it of his mother that he thought, or of God? In the unity of this kind of suffering human love with the love of Jesus, men come to know God better. Dean Bosworth says,

"The utmost that a father can do to get back a son who has gone wrong is to show his son how he feels in the center of his being about his wrongdoing. The utmost that a father can do to cure a child of lying is in some way to show the child how he hates a lie. If he does not hate a lie he can do little to redeem the child from falseness to truth. There is a powerful illustration of this in the life of Professor Austin Phelps:

"He and honor were one thing in our minds. The scene in his study when one of his eldest children told the first lie is too well remembered. The child was seven, and the falsehood was proved and acknowledged. To the young father this commonplace incident was a heartrending experience. He had come home from a journey exhausted; but the moral crisis must not wait for a man to rest. The awe in the little offender's heart when the fatigue of travel deepened upon that sensitive face with the deadly pallor of overwhelming emotion cannot be forgotten yet. He spoke to the child in a low, stern, yet quivering voice such as befitted the solemnity of some tremendous moral event. It ceased to be an event, -- it became an epoch to have uttered a falsehood. He spoke of the holiness of truth and of the beauty of honor; he dwelt in language quite clear to the little child's mind on the enormity of that little act.

1. Hester I. Radford, "The Mother," The Atlantic Monthly, February, 1910.

"Beneath his breath he touched for a moment upon the tendency of falseness in the heart. Liars, he said, in an awestruck, all but inaudible tone, liars, he said, went to hell. But then and there before the child could cower before the moral shock of his displeasure, a displeasure which coming from the ideal of fatherly gentleness, seemed like the rebuke of offended God himself -- this too human father bowed his face and wept bitterly. Those heavy sobs, that melting sight never heard or seen before or since, effected what word or rod could not have done. Awed into shame, silenced by this revelation of the truth that no soul sinneth to itself, the child crept to his feet and sobbed with him. At that hour was the abhorrence of dishonor born in the heart. That lie was the last."

"In the profound religious experience of Jesus' last hours the heart of God was laid open to human eyes. . . . Men see in the suffering of Jesus not simply how far human selfishness will go, but how far the heart of God goes in its reclaiming desire. Jesus on the cross could have used the words he is said to have uttered the evening before: 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.'"1

This is the experience that makes men say, "If God is like that, he is all right."

They come then to trust him and think of him in Jesus' terms. How clearly in the story of the Prodigal Son do men read the story of their own sin and salvation.

"Blind, fainting, to his mighty breast
He caught and held me fast;
I knew the fortress of his arms
About my weakness cast;
And, when he kissed my traitor cheek,
I guessed his heart at last.

But the piteous words I oft had conned
I trembling strove to say;
But sudden glory round me poured
A brighter, richer day.
In wonderment I lifted up
My head that drooping lay.

"The glory streamed from out His eyes,
As from all Beauty's throne.
O depths of love unthinkable
That in that splendor shone!
O pain of love that travaileth
And bleedeth for its own!

.

He brought me home, and here I sit,
Even in my boyhood's place;
And on my very soul is stamped
Each largess of His grace;
But still transfiguring all I see
That radiance of His face!"¹

Men know that God is, and that he is a Father as they
come to see Jesus. They know then that

"Ever God bears his cross and suffers on it as
evil men temporarily triumph and darkness settles
upon their world; but invariably in wondrous, re-
surrected power, God comes back to resume his ministry
and to endure rebuffs, but by all means, as he is able,
to save men from themselves."²

His insistency is like that of an earthly Father. No
matter into what depths a man may sink, no matter what the
wreck of life, still is the hand of love stretched out for the
sinner. Still he knows, no matter how unworthy he may be, that
God is following and waiting for him to turn and be healed. The
present day is supposed to have scant sympathy for the mystic,
yet Francis Thompson has voiced for all the experience of the
soul who found God again in the Cross of Jesus.

"Strange, piteous, futile thing,
Wherefore should any set thee love apart?
Seeing none but I makes much of naught" (He said),
"And human love needs human meriting:
How hast thou merited --
Of all man's clotted clay the dingiest clot?
Alack, thou knowest not

1. Marion Pelton Guild, "The Prodigal Son," Christ in the Poetry
of To-day, an Anthology by Martha Foote Crow.
2. Oswald W.S. McCall, "Cardinals of Faith," p. 92.

How little worthy of any love thou art!
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee
Save Me, save only Me?
All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!'
Halts by me that footfall:
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?
'Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He whom thou seekest!
Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me."

The writer brings his study to a close feeling keenly its inadequacy. The experience of the Cross, so varied in its expression, so persistent in its purifying touch, so infinite in its creative power, baffles expression. It is not to be fully weighed and measured. But enough has been grasped to build a life on: forgiveness of sin and renewal of life through the death of Jesus on the cross; assurance that vicarious suffering and sacrifice is God's costly method of progress because He himself bears a share, the greatest share; knowledge that God is close to his children and suffers with and for them. Deeper experience will bring fuller knowledge. But always with increasing understanding comes the echo of Dante's cry

"Christ

Beam'd upon that cross, and pattern
fails me now!"

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